

# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

By JOHN OXENHAM, Author of *God's Prisoner*, *A Princess of Vascevy*, &c.

CHAPTER I.—HOW I JUMPED INTO FORTUNE.

**I**F I were a believer in stars and omens, and such things, I should certainly have the best of reasons for saying that I was born under the luckiest and brightest of both; for the two events in my life that have had most to do with guiding it into happy channels were matters of pure—chance?—good luck? I prefer to thank something less impalpable and more thankable.

I spent many years on the sea, you see; and no man with brains in his head and a heart inside him can do that without coming to the knowledge that chance and luck are not the powers that be, hide it as he may under a mask of carelessness. Intimacy with the elements provokes no contempt, but a profound consciousness of personal insignificance which makes towards reliance on a higher power; and if we call it luck or chance, that is because we have British blood in our veins, and don't talk much of those other things.

I was the youngest fourth officer of my year in the Cunard service, and again the youngest third, and the youngest second. Possibly, if no one younger had turned up in the meantime, I might in due course have become the youngest captain; but that happened which changed all my life, and turned it otherwise.

My mother died while I was still very young. My father, before he followed her, gave me a good education at Merchiston, near Edinburgh; and when I joined the service that soon told.

The first of my fortunate happenings occurred during my fourth voyage with Captain Hains on the *Servia*.

I was leaning over the stern-railing one evening chatting with a friend and waiting for the dinner-bell to ring, when a shout from amidships startled us; and as I glanced over the rail I saw a white

face slide past in the green-white scuffle of the ship's wake. It was purely a matter of instinct to rip away the life-belt that hung at the rail, and with it on my arm to spring out as far as I could in the direction of the face. I was a good swimmer, and came up with it with little difficulty. I slipped the belt over the head of the drowning man, as I found it to be on closer acquaintance, and waved my hand to the boat that was already making towards us.

In ten minutes from the time my foot kicked off the stern-railing we were on board again, and the *Servia* was under full steam, trying to make up for those lost ten minutes, which, by the way, cost the man overboard the pool on the run next day. However, if any one could afford to lose the pool it was he.

His name was Ephraim Sandbaker, and he came from California. He was a very quiet, unpretentious old soul, and he was worth twenty million dollars; but that I only learned later. For some days I was almost afraid to show face on deck, so overpowering, to a naturally reserved and modest man, were the remarks of the passengers, especially the American girls, who, I believe, took a special and perverse delight in covering me with confusion.

However, they gradually calmed down, and let me go about in peace and free from blushes.

Old Mr Sandbaker said very little; but he wrung my hand very gratefully while he held my eyes with his, which were very bright and somewhat moist. All he did say was, 'You'll never be sorry to think you lengthened an old man's life, my boy.'

I said, 'No, sir; but any one else would have done the same.'

Practically nothing more passed on the subject. The old gentleman was always very friendly and pleasant, and would, I think, have been more so,



distance of the lovely face that looked calmly into mine from that curiously-carved dead-white frame on the wall. It was the face of a girl, the most exquisitely beautiful face I had ever seen, the incarnation—say rather an inspiration—of all that is sweet and pure and good, and altogether lovely. As I stood gazing at it a voice behind me said triumphantly in French, 'Fair—one!'

And another voice cried argumentatively, 'Not at all! Dark—one!'

Then the dispute, whatever it was, was taken up by other voices, and a wordy *mêlée* ensued, to which I paid no attention; because in the first place it was as unintelligible to me as the chattering of many parrots, and because, in the second place, my thoughts were given entirely to that lovely face before me. Was it a portrait, or only the idealisation of a master hand and brain?

I turned to the catalogue.

'No 1001.—Portrait of Mdlle. X..... Louis Bidard.'

That left the point undecided. But the one thing certain was, that never in my life had I seen anything so charming, and the very sight and thought of that sweet face sent new life spinning through my veins and altered the look of the world for me.

I went to the Comédie Française that night to see Bernhardt; but the face of Mdlle. X. danced between me and the Divine Sara, and diverted my thoughts from even her finest agonies.

In the nature of things, the following afternoon found me once more at the Salon renewing my *tête-à-tête* with the beautiful unknown. I noticed that Mdlle. X. attracted very general attention, and scarcely a passer-by but stopped and lingered to admire. It struck me as very ludicrous to find myself actually beginning to feel jealous of these attentions.

'Fair—one!' I heard the same voice behind me; and again that other voice, 'No—dark!' and again a wrangle; and when I turned I saw two young men assiduously taking note of the crowd, though why and wherefore I could not make out.

The desire suddenly possessed me to become the owner of that picture, and I made my way to the secretary's desk to inquire if it was for sale.

'No, monsieur,' the secretary was explaining with smiling courtesy to a man who had arrived just in front of me; 'that portrait would have been sold fifty—a hundred times, had it been for sale; but it is not offered.'

The other man turned away, and in my not over fluent French I asked the secretary if his remark applied to No. 1001—feeling fully assured in my own mind that it did so.

He smilingly confirmed my fears, and I too passed on. I had already looked for the address of M. Louis Bidard in the catalogue, but it was

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'I would, monsieur, with pleasure, but'—and he shook his head knowingly—'there is none.'

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'Oh yes, it does, *mon ami*.'

'Very well, then he is mine.'

'Not a bit of it! Not a very little bit of it, my child! He is distinctly and emphatically blond.'

'*Phistre!* Your eye is losing its cunning, *mon gars*. Monsieur's complexion is brown—distinctly brown, with a tendency towards black. So that counts to me.'

I could not make out what they were quarrelling about, and I strolled away and left the building.

It became a regular part of my day's programme to pay my respects to Mdlle. X., and the calm gaze of the great violet eyes, with just a hint of shy wistfulness in them, remained with me all the day and brightened everything else I saw.

Several times I imagined myself the object of remark from the same half-dozen young fellows who seemed to have constituted themselves a guard of honour to Mdlle. X., and to take note of the many who stopped to admire her. I had by this time learned to distinguish them as art-students; but what might be the meaning of their curious carry-on I could not at all make out.

One afternoon, however, as I strolled up to the portrait, one of these young gentlemen gave a cry of triumph, darted forward, and, to my great astonishment, shook me heartily by the hand, gabbling as he did so at the rate of two hundred words a minute. I was not quite sure if he was making fun of me or not, for he certainly was not of my acquaintance. But it is my custom to grasp little nettles of this kind firmly and so destroy their sting. Accordingly, I gripped his hand, smiled pleasantly on him, and murmured, 'So very pleased to make monsieur's acquaintance!' till he howled; and, clasping his right arm with his left hand, as though he feared it would come off, he finally sank on his knees, and his three friends danced round us in paroxysms of laughter, while I continued shaking him heartily by the hand.

'Ah, the poor Philippe! he is broken; he is mangled,' cried one between his spasms of laughter.

but that I always had a fear when he got me alone that he was going to offer me a reward for saving his life.

As I have said, our little swim did not occupy ten minutes; but those ten minutes were the ten most fruitful minutes of my life. I doubt if any Rothschilds ever coined money more rapidly. And that jump from the stern-rail of the *Servia* was for me a jump into a new life, though at the time I did not know it.

Just twelve months later the bag which came out by the tender at Queenstown brought me a letter from a firm of solicitors in Liverpool. It was brief and to the point:

'DEAR SIR,—We are advised by Messrs Lock and Steele of Los Angeles, California, that under the will of their late client, the Hon. Ephraim Sandbacker, you are entitled to the sum of one million dollars, and they hold same to your orders. Your instructions will have our immediate and careful attention.—We remain, dear Sir, yours faithfully,  
LAYTON & SON.  
'Hugh Lamont, Esq., S.S. *Servia*.'

I got such a shock at the first reading of that letter that it took two more readings to get the sense of it into me. Then I took it along to the captain and put it into his hand. He read it through carefully, and then his dear old face lighted up with gladness, and he wrung my hand lustily.

'I'm heartily glad, my boy,' he said. 'I knew the old chap would never forget, and he hasn't; but it's not every man that would have remembered to such an extent. Pity, after all,' he said quietly; 'here's another good sailor spoiled. I suppose'—and he looked at me with whimsical wistfulness.

'No,' I said; 'I think I'll have a stroll on dry land. My only regret will be in leaving you, sir. I never want to sail under a better captain.'

'We shall miss you,' he said.

I forgot to ask him to say nothing about it, and it was all over the ship inside an hour, and once more I was put to the blush at the congratulations which rained upon me.

So, at the age of twenty-eight, endowed with the best of health and spirits, my fortune was made, by no grace of my own, but by, let us say, a happy accident and the generous remembrance of a grateful old man.

#### CHAPTER II.—MADEMOISELLE X.: HER PORTRAIT.

**F**OR two years I roamed to and fro over the wide world, visiting in that time nearly every country that had ever in any way appealed to my heart or my imagination.

Foreign lands had always had a fascination for me; and now that, in this wonderful way, I

was able to indulge my fancy, I did so with the keenest enjoyment. Time and money were alike no object. I had no ties to keep me at home, and was free to go whithersoever the spirit led me; and the spirit led me far and wide, and with a trend towards the unbeaten tracks of travel. First I crossed back to America, sailing as a passenger on my old ship the *Servia*, I think I may say without any conceit, to the great satisfaction of my good friend the captain. We had great times together; and we tramped the deck and the bridge for hours, with, in the case of one of us at all events, an enjoyment which had never been there before. The very fact of travelling as a passenger where hitherto I had been a servant and an official was in itself an enjoyable novelty, and had in it many elements of amusement. My old friends among the crew were constantly mixing up my new position with the old one, and coming to me with reports and so on, and then backing off with a grin and a turn of the tongue in their cheeks which always started us both laughing.

After a run through Canada and the States I crossed to California and visited Los Angeles. The only representative of Mr Ephraim Sandbacker was his widow, an old lady of seventy, who, when she knew who I was, could not find large enough expression for her good feelings towards me. She would have had me settle down 'right there,' and become a son to her old age; but the travel-fever was hot in my veins, and after a delightful visit I only got away by promising to come back and see her again when I was ready to settle down for good and all, if that time ever came.

Then, through South America and the lovely islands of the Pacific, I wandered up to Japan, where I lingered long. Then to Australia, India, Egypt, Asia Minor, and so to Europe, and at last to Paris and all that awaited me there and afterwards.

Paris charmed me greatly, and the debt I owe to her will never be fully paid, for she proved the gateway to those very strange experiences through which I was to attain to all that I hold highest in my life.

One fateful day I rambled into the Salon. I was no judge of pictures, and my taste was no doubt hopeless; but I knew when a picture pleased me, and out of such I was able to get much enjoyment. It seemed to me a very clever show, if slightly eccentric here and there; and I was passing somewhat inattentively through the last room, my eyes surfeited with the masses of colour on which they had already feasted, when I stopped short, with a catch of the breath and a thrill like an electric shock, at the glance of a pair of eyes that caught mine and held them captive.

I had seen many beautiful women in my time, but I had never seen anything within measurable

distance of the lovely face that looked calmly into mine from that curiously-carved dead-white frame on the wall. It was the face of a girl, the most exquisitely beautiful face I had ever seen, the incarnation—say rather an inspiration—of all that is sweet and pure and good, and altogether lovely. As I stood gazing at it a voice behind me said triumphantly in French, 'Fair—one!'

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'Have pity on him, monsieur! He is *bon garçon*, and meant no harm.'

'Nor I, monsieur,' I said. 'I simply accepted the greeting of monsieur, whose acquaintance I am delighted to make;' and as I wrung his hand once more Master Philippe howled again.

However, I released him at last, and he got up, carefully pulled each separate finger into shape, smoothed it out, and then impressively bandaged his hand with his handkerchief. He was a merry youth, however, and bore no ill-will.

'Allow me to introduce my friends, monsieur,' he said, waving the bandaged hand towards each one in turn—'Monsieur Louis Duval, Monsieur Jean Lépine, Monsieur Raoul Delavoye. Pray proffer them the hand of friendship also.'

But they one and all declined, and contented themselves with bows.

'And now, messieurs, perhaps you will have the extreme kindness to explain why we are on such friendly terms.'

'Assuredly,' said Philippe of the bandaged hand; 'it is due to monsieur. It is thus, monsieur. Monsieur has unwittingly rendered me a service, and I desired to thank him for it.'

'I am very happy to have been of service to you. How did I manage it? What is it I have done?'

'You see that portrait, monsieur?' pointing to Mdle. X.

I nodded.

'Yes,' laughed Philippe, 'monsieur has seen it several times, and in that lies the service he has rendered me. You see, monsieur, we are divided. Louis and Jean there hold that like tends to like. Raoul and myself hold that the strongest affinity lies between opposites—that a fair man prefers a dark woman, and a dark man a fair woman. And you, monsieur?'

'Opposites, I think, as a rule. But that portrait is so very beautiful that any one would be attracted by it. Can you tell me who Mdle. X. is, Monsieur Philippe?'

He shook his head.

'Perhaps you can tell me where to find M. Louis Bidard?'

A glance flashed between them, and I got an impression of something like a wink.

'But, yes, monsieur, that is easy. We can take monsieur there in the twinkling of an eye.'

'I shall be infinitely obliged to you.'

'*Allons!*' said Philippe promptly. 'We will go at once;' and he led the way. The others linked arms and followed, with scarce concealed expectation and enjoyment.

Master Philippe's merry eyes twinkled many times before we reached our destination, and I had begun to wonder where we were getting to, when he halted suddenly and pointed across the street to a gaily-decorated restaurant, along the front of which ran a large gilt-lettered sign: '*A la Palette d'Or, par Louis Bidard.*'

I stared at it in surprise. It was an artist's studio I was expecting, not a restaurant.

'But'—I began.

'Stay; we will introduce you to him,' said Philippe, and led the way inside.

A stout, high-coloured, Napoleon-Third faced man, in his shirt-sleeves, stood behind the counter. Flitting to and fro among the marble-topped tables was an exceedingly pretty girl. Both the girl and the man greeted us with friendly nods.

'Monsieur Bidard,' said my keeper, 'here is an English gentleman who has come all the way from the Salon to shake hands with you.'

'Enchanted!' beamed M. Bidard, extending a hand like a big beefsteak. 'What can I do for monsieur?'

Our hand-shake passed off without any undue display of strength on either side, to the great disappointment of my new friends.

'I fear, Monsieur Bidard, I am here under a misapprehension,' I managed to piece out. 'I came to see M. Louis Bidard, the painter of a portrait in the Salon.'

'Ah, these young men!' said Bidard, with a twinkle. 'Monsieur is not the first; but I have not the honour. However, being here, can I be of any other service to monsieur?'

'Certainly,' said I, taking a sudden resolution. 'We want dinner and a private room. That is, if my friends will join me?'

'Will we?' said Philippe. 'Will we not? Monsieur is—what is this that the little Pectairs calls it?'

'*Tromp-brique!*' said Raoul.

'That's it. Monsieur is *tromp-brique*, and *bon garçon* altogether. We accept his hospitality. Is it not so, my children?'

The children replied in chorus that it was very much so.

'*Allons, then!*' said I, and followed Monsieur Bidard, who was inviting us to upper regions.

'Ninette will wait upon us, Monsieur Bidard?' cried Philippe.

'Assuredly, Monsieur Philippe. Ninette will be enchanted.'

Dinner was served almost immediately; but Ninette had managed to find time to decorate herself specially for the occasion, and proved a decided addition to the festivities. She was as lively in her talk as she was deft in her service, and flashed back a dozen smart-clipped words for every one the young artists addressed to her. From what I could catch of the talk, which was mostly too rapid and too idiomatic for my understanding, the young lady was in the habit of occasionally acting as model in one of the schools close at hand, and so was exceedingly well known to my friends. They were all on the merriest of terms, and we all enjoyed ourselves exceedingly.

It was only when Ninette had brought us gallantly through a very excellent dinner, and

provided us with coffee and liqueurs and American cigarettes, and had then wafted herself out of the room amid a chorus of compliments on herself and the dinner and everything else, that I turned to Philippe—who had been rendered perfectly happy by my begging him to choose the wines for the feast, and had done it to our great satisfaction and his own—and said:

'And now, Monsieur Philippe, if you bear no ill-will for my unjustifiable assault upon you at our first meeting, will you do me a favour?'

'Monsieur Lamont, I am yours to command. Oh that all Englishmen were like you! We would love them as it is not always possible to do. Ask, monsieur! *Tiens*, I know. You wished to know who painted Mdlle. X.?'

'Exactly!'

'I will tell you. It is Charles Roussel. He lives in the Rue Catharine, No. 13.'

'And do you know who Mdlle. X. is?'

He shook his head. 'No, we none of us know that. In fact, there may be no such person.'

'But, no, Philippe, *mon ami*,' said one of the others. 'Can you, now, I put it to you—can you imagine Roussel evolving that beauty from his own head?'

'It is difficult,' acknowledged Philippe; 'but then, you see, I do not like Roussel myself.'

'He is a clever painter, anyhow,' I said.

'Oh, he is clever, that is without doubt; but'—and he shrugged his shoulders and shook his head.

'Do you think he would sell the picture?' I asked.

'He might,' he said doubtfully; 'there could be no harm in asking. He might sell or he might throw a bottle at your head. He is a trifle

cracked at times, monsieur, and he is a sulky devil, though he can be charming enough when he chooses; only he doesn't often choose. That is the reason why I, though I am accustomed to mixing with mild lunatics'—and he looked solemnly round at the rest, who, however, only winked lazily back at him through the smoke—'that is why I do not get on with Roussel.'

'He is making fifty thousand francs a year,' said Raoul.

'And mostly portraits,' said Jean.

'No imagination,' said Louis.

'Not a scrap,' said Philippe. 'He might as well be a photographer.'

'In which case, with his connections, he would probably make twice as much,' said Raoul.

'All the same,' said Jean, 'he may be a good painter, but he is not an artist.'

'Isn't that rather a nice distinction?' I said.

'After all, do you not all of you paint portraits? If it is a landscape, Nature is your model; if it is an historical scene, you still work from models, I suppose'—

'Still, there the artistic faculty comes in,' said Philippe, 'and this pig Roussel has it not.'

'Then we may conclude there is an original?' said I.

'Must be,' said Philippe.

'I will call on Monsieur Roussel.'

'And if he's in a bad mood and throws a bottle at your head—shake him by the hand, Monsieur Lamont.'

They wanted to show me something of life in the Quartier, but I was in no humour for racketing, and we parted the best of friends.

## FORTUNES IN THE CLOUDS: THE GOLD-MINES OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.



THE rich sands of Wild Horse Creek, in the eastern Kootenay district of southern British Columbia, attracted in 1865 the attention of a gold prospector; and so rich did they prove that within a few months some five thousand diggers gathered there, for whose accommodation the provincial government constructed a rough trail. This wild highway of the mountains wound along the edge of a vast basin, touching the tumbling waters of Trail Creek, and followed its noisy channel to the camp. Within five years twenty million dollars in gold dust and nuggets were taken out; when, the gold becoming exhausted, the gold-hunters scattered afar, and the trail became overgrown with the rank vegetation of that moist climate.

During those five years miners distributed themselves along the bars and cañons of the creek; prospects were obtained there of one dollar to the pan and of twenty-five cents to the shovel;

nuggets were found in the gravel weighing from two to seventy-eight dollars, and ordinary claims were paying from twenty to thirty dollars a day each man. So great did the excitement grow that Hudson's Bay Factor McKay reported five thousand miners in the district. Then came the collapse; but mining in East Kootenay did not die with the decline of the placers. After years of inactivity the district took on new life, and is stirring now with a mighty impulse which will have no such ephemeral existence as the placer boom of 1865.

Some twenty-five years later the practised eye of one of a party of two explorers wandering over the old road caught sight of a large ledge of mineral-bearing rock crossing the trail. Supplies at that time running low, one of the party started for the nearest settlement; and the one remaining in camp, picking his way through dense undergrowth, reached a point on Red Mountain where forest fires had bared its rough sides, and there found bold iron-outcrops of numerous strong veins

on which he staked his claim, in the vicinity of what is now the city of Rossland, which was then non-existent. He located altogether five claims, now rated at an aggregate value of more than fifteen million dollars. These poor prospectors, however, not being possessed of means for development, sold their holding for a trifle; and it was not till 1895 that the mines opened on these claims took on an international reputation. To-day they are known as the Le Roi, War Eagle, Centre Star, Idaho, and the Virginia.

For six years after the discovery the purchasers worked on painfully developing these claims, and the district was scarcely known to the outside world; but with the subsequent opening of a very rich ore-chute, and another of pyrites, dividends began to be declared, and poor men suddenly became rich. Then a rush was made for the snow-capped peaks where such wealth was to be gained; and in the winter of 1896-97 the primeval loghouse settlement grew to an ambitious city, lots were sold at fabulous prices, utopian claims were recorded, and mining companies were floated with impossible capitalisation, shafts being sunk in barren granite where mineral enough to pay on assay one cent in value did not exist. Then followed the usual financial crash, the result of wild speculation; and Rossland trembled in the balance for its existence. Some of its residents, however, with a faith that was sublime, stuck by the camp in the face of discouragement, and little by little confidence was restored. With the advent of 1898 dividends again began to be paid, shipments of ore assumed large proportions, and Rossland again developed, going steadily ahead until it has now reached prosperity almost unprecedented in the career of mining camps. The city, with a population of nearly eight thousand souls, has electric light, water-supply, and drainage, and supplies are abundant at prices very little in excess of those of older eastern cities. The costly experience of 1896-97 showed that hap-hazard, ignorant driving of tunnels and shafts could not compete with companies controlling large capital for development, and that the employment of trained specialists in mining was necessary to ensure success. The amount of heavy mining machinery in use at these mines is unrivalled in the province, and power is derived from a large electrical plant on the Kootenay River, thirty-five miles distant. Sent with but little loss of energy, this power is used in driving the air-compressors that run the entire plant of the larger mines. The product of the five mines in 1898 reached 116,697 tons, valued at 2,804,758 dollars, assaying, besides iron and copper, from twelve to twenty dollars gold per ton; and the yield for 1899 will more than maintain the record of the past.

Toad Mountain, nine miles south of the rapidly growing city of Nelson, is another of the wealth-yielding finds of a prospecting party searching

for placer gold. Success in this proving in-different, they resolved to abandon the search; and, whilst looking for their horses, which had strayed to the top of a mountain where the warm Chinook wind had cut away the snow, one of the party stumbled across an outcrop of mineral at a spot where is now the Silver King Mine, the ore of which is remarkable for its brilliantly rich peacock-colouring. The claim was 'jumped' through some technical irregularity, and virtually passed out of the original discoverers' hands. The name of Toad Mountain was given from the following incident: As one of the party was writing the notice on the discovery-post he said to his partner, 'What shall we call this mountain?' As he spoke a big warty toad hopped out from beneath a log, when the exclamation came, 'Look at that toad! Call it Toad Mountain;' and so it is still named. In 1892 the claim was sold to an English company. What the vendor received was never made known; but a payment of twenty-five thousand dollars to the only survivor of the prospecting party is evidence of a good round sum. This mine at present pays 7 per cent. interest on the preferred stock, besides 15 per cent. on the ordinary capital, in dividends. It is fully equipped and developed, and out of the profits the company has built the most complete and best-equipped smelter in Canada.

The Slocan district of Kootenay, famous for its yield of silver, is another centre of activity which owes its prominence to accident. In 1891 two prospectors left Ainsworth, a leading mining camp of a vast stretch of country extending west from the Rocky Mountains to the Arrow Lakes, successive extensions of the great Columbia River. The towns of Kaslo, Three Forks, Sandow, and New Denver, now bustling with life and activity, did not then exist. Proceeding on their trip to the lofty mountains up the north fork of Kaslo Creek, one of the party, while eating his lunch, picked up an ordinary-looking piece of rock, the weight of which puzzled him. On breaking this open, good-looking galena was disclosed. The prospectors returned to Ainsworth, where an assay of the specimen gave a return of 174 ounces of silver and 75 per cent. of lead to the ton. This result getting wind, other parties set out to locate claims; but a compromise was finally effected, giving all an equal interest in the locations made. During their stay twenty-three claims were located, some of which have since turned out veritable bonanzas. The prospectors returned in the autumn with numerous samples, and the news of their success spreading, a stampede was made from Ainsworth, which for a time was deserted, there being only one person, a woman, left behind; but it was soon repeopled. As the news spread, prospectors from far and near hurried into the wild mountains. It was no jaunting trip; only the most experienced and rugged mountaineers could endure the hardships and the wearing toil.



Three passes were found into the new district, all requiring boating on stormy lakes or rushing rivers, and after that a climb up mountain ranges obstructed by fallen timber and tangled with undergrowth so dense that pack-animals could not be employed. The fortune-hunter had, therefore, to carry his blankets and supplies upon his back, and, thus burdened, to toil through the lonely cañons and slowly scale the snow-clad summits. The Slocan country was long known as 'the poor man's camp' from the circumstances of rich-paying ores coming to the surface, and the steepness of the mountain-sides permitting development by tunnels, thus saving much expense. Some of the mines here have paid millions of dollars, and many have enriched their owners by immediate profits. Capital has followed the first miners; and concentrating-mills, tramways for transportation of the ore, and three lines of railway into the district are now in operation. These railways are the Kaslo and Slocan, running from Kootenay Lake well up to the summit; the Nakusp and Slocan branch of the Canadian Pacific, running from Nakusp on the Columbia River; and another branch of the Canadian Pacific, following the Slocan River to Slocan Lake. During 1898 ores and concentrates aggregating 30,057 tons, valued at one hundred dollars per ton, were shipped, representing that year's yield at about three million dollars.

Boundary Creek district in southern British Columbia includes an area of some four hundred miles square, and is said to show the widest veins of gold-bearing copper ore in the world. It owes its beginning to the workers of placer-mines. Thirty years ago fifty thousand dollars was estimated to have been taken out of the creek in dust and nuggets; but, not proving lasting, the district was deserted. In 1886 another set of placer-miners journeying through found some likely-looking quartz in Copper Camp; but they passed on without following up their discovery. In the next year, however, another prospector located Smith's Camp, and mining proper was at once commenced. The district embraces Kettle River and Grand Forks divisions, and the Knob Hill Mine near Greenwood produces almost solid ore free from waste, the vein of chalcopyrites being over four hundred feet wide. Greenwood bids fair to rival Rossland and Nelson, as the Columbia and western branch of the Canadian Pacific Railroad, which now reaches it, will materially aid in the shipment of ore, and smelters are to be provided close at hand. The Canadian Pacific Railroad Company has strong faith in the mines of the Kootenays, and evinces a determination to provide means for reducing ore, looking for profit from hauling and the prosperity which follows settlement. The Kettle River, rushing through a narrow cañon with a descent of one hundred and twenty-five feet, gives a force estimated at twenty thousand horse-power. Near Cascade City free

milling ore is being developed; and Grand Forks, known as 'the Gateway to the Boundary,' is a rapidly-growing town, with a new smelter. Up the north fork of Kettle River is a mineral-belt of importance, Pathfinder Mountain, carrying valuable mining properties, in the vicinity of which is a gold-belt where the ores show little copper, the gold values existing in hematite iron. Knob Hill, Old Ironsides, Winnipeg and Brandon, and Golden Crown are the most important mines, and are well equipped with machinery. Summit Camp, seven miles from Greenwood, was two years ago bought for sixty thousand dollars, and was recently resold for three hundred thousand. Pass Creek, Long Lake, and Deadwood Camp, as yet but little developed, afford good showing, and numerous other locations are so situated in proximity to paying mines that probably any of them may produce mines equal to the best in Boundary Creek district when they shall have entered more extensively into development work.

Some eighteen miles south of Nelson lies the town of Ymir, situated on Salmon River, with Wild Horse, Bear, and Quartz Creeks entering it within the town limits. These drain a mineral district rapidly assuming a prominent position. English companies own the most promising mines, and it is said no camp in British Columbia has greater popularity upon the London Stock Exchange. The largest stamp-mill in the provinces has been erected at the Ymir Mine, treating 100 tons of ore per day; and sufficient ore is in sight to maintain this rate for two years without further development. The Dundee and Porto Rico Mines are giving large yields, the latter in one month extracting 590 ounces of gold from 542 tons of crushed ore. The output of the Ymir Mines for 1899 is estimated at 1600 tons per week, closely rivalling Rossland. It is believed that other claims quite equal to those now so productive lie undeveloped in the surrounding hills.

The recent construction of the Crow's Nest Pass Railway has opened a coal-mining centre, where enormous quantities of coke are now manufactured for use in smelters. At Fernie, about half-way along the line, one of the greatest coal deposits in the world is being worked, the product of which, tested by the British fleet on the Pacific station, has been pronounced superior to all others. The company working it has some seventy or eighty beehive coke-ovens, and intend to erect two hundred in all. It is developing twelve seams of coal, and the amount in sight is estimated to run into millions of tons.

Volumes could be written if all the mines located as well as operating were described. With all the existing activity, the vast district is to a great extent unexplored. There are streams and cañons within the known mineral-belt where no prospector has yet penetrated, and where doubtless as rich rewards await the toiler as any that have yet been won in the most productive camps.

No one can accurately predict the future of British Columbia; but if within the next five years the development of new mining-fields proceeds as in the past five years, it will be the most productive

as well as the largest field of wealth-producing power on the American continent, and its population will rank with that of any of the older settled districts of the Dominion of Canada.

## A R R E C I F O S.

By LOUIS BECKE.

CHAPTER I.—'DEAD BROKE.'



WILD, blustering day in Sydney, the queen city of the Southern Seas. Since early morn a keen, cutting, sleet-laden westerly gale had been blowing, rattling and shaking the windows of the houses

in the higher and more exposed portions of the town, and churning the blue waters of the harbour into a white seethe of angry foam as it swept outwards to the wide Pacific.

In one of the little bays situated between Miller's Point and Daves' Battery, and overlooked by the old-time Fort Phillip on Observatory Hill, were a number of vessels, some alongside the wharves and others lying to their anchors out in the stream, with the wind whistling through their rain-soaked cordage. They were of all rigs and sizes, from the lordly Black Ball liner of a thousand tons to the small fore-and-aft coasting-schooner of less than fifty. Among them all there was but one steamer, a handsome brig-rigged, black-painted, and black-funnelled craft of fifteen hundred tons, flying the house-flag of the Peninsular and Oriental Company. Steamers were rare in Sydney Harbour in those days (it was the year 1860), and the *Avoca* had pride of place and her own mooring buoy, for she was the only English mail-boat, and her commander and his officers were regarded with the same respect as if they and their ship were the admiral and staff of the Australian Squadron.

Leaning with folded arms upon one of the wharf bollards, and apparently oblivious of the driving sleet and cutting wind, a shabbily-dressed man of about thirty years of age was looking, pipe in mouth, at the mail-boat and the sailing-vessels lying in the stream. There were four in all—the steamer; an American whaling-barque; a small brig of about two hundred tons flying the Hawaiian Islands colours; and a big, sprawling, motherly-looking, full-rigged ship, whose huge bow-ports denoted that she carried lumber.

The man put his hand in his pocket and jingled together his few remaining coins; then he turned away, and walked along the wharf till he reached the side of a warehouse, the lee of which was sheltered from the wind and rain. He leant his back against the wall, and again handled the coins.

'Seven shillings and two coppers,' he muttered,

'and a waterman would want at least three shillings to pull round here from the Circular Quay in such dirty weather. No, Ted Barry, my boy, the funds won't run to it. But that brig is my fancy. She's all ready for sea: all her boats up with the gripes lashed, and the Custom-House fellow doing his dog-trot under the awning, waiting for the skipper to come aboard and the tug to range alongside as soon as this howling gale takes off a bit. I'll wait here for another hour and watch for him.'

Sitting under the lee of the wall, he again filled his pipe, and began to smoke placidly, scanning with a seaman's eye the various vessels lying alongside the wharves.

Work had ceased for the day, the lumpers and longshore men had gone to their homes, and the usual idlers and loafers who are always to be found in the immediate vicinity of shipping or sitting about on the wharf-stringers, fishing, had been driven away by the inclemency of the weather, or were gathered in small parties in the bars of the numerous public-houses near by. Now and then a seaman would be seen either returning to his ship or hurrying along the wharf towards the city, with his coat-collar turned up to his ears and his hands thrust into the capacious pockets of his heavy jacket. The whole scene was miserable and depressing.

Presently a policeman appeared, walking slowly along under the shelter of the warehouse walls. He too was enjoying the luxury of a pipe, for there was no danger of running across the sergeant on such a day as this. As he drew near to the man who was sitting down he gave him a quick but apparently careless glance: a wharf-policeman has a natural distrust of a man who keeps hanging about stores and warehouses doing nothing, or standing out in the open exposed to the rain; but the guardian of the peace was satisfied that the object of his brief scrutiny was no loafer or possible burglar, and bade him a civil 'Good-day,' to which the man at once responded.

'It's beastly weather—isn't it?' said the official, as he leant against the wall, evidently disposing himself for a chat.

'It is indeed,' replied the other; 'and it's getting dirtier still over there to the south-east.'

'That's pleasant for me. I don't get relieved

until midnight, and this beat here is none too pleasant a one on a dark night, believe me.'

'So I should imagine. I'll be glad to get back into the city as soon as I can; but I'm waiting here to see if I can get aboard that little brig over there. Do you know her name?'

'Yes. She's the *Mahina*, South Sea trader. But I don't see how you can get off to her; there's no watermen here, and none of her boats will come ashore—I can tell you that much for certain. The captain is on shore looking for men, and those who are aboard won't be given a chance to put foot in a boat.'

'Why? Anything gone wrong aboard?'

'Rather! There's been a lot of trouble with the men, though there hasn't been any court-work over it. The captain and mate are holy terrors—regular brutes, I'm told. Six of the hands swam ashore a few nights ago, and got clean away, poor beggars! You ain't thinking of joining her—are you?'

'Indeed I am. I want a ship pretty badly. I'm broke.'

'Well, don't ship on *that* craft, young fellow; take my advice. Are you dead, stony broke?'

'Pretty near; all but a few shillings. I find it hard to get a ship—that is, the sort of ship I want. I've been in the South Sea trade a long time, and I like it.'

'Ah! I see. Well, you know best, mister. I dare say you'll see the *Mahina's* captain coming down the wharf before it gets dark. He's a little, dark-faced, good-looking chap, with a pointed beard. I wish you luck anyway.'

'Thank you,' said Barry, as he returned the policeman's good-natured nod, and watched him saunter off again towards the end of the wharf.

Half-an-hour later five men appeared, all walking quickly towards the spot where Barry was still patiently waiting. Barry at once recognised the man who was leading as the captain of the brig; the four who followed at his heels were common seamen by their dress, and ruffians of the first water by their appearance. Each carried a bundle under his arm, and one a small chest on his shoulder—evidently the wealthy man of the lot.

Stepping out from under shelter of the wall, Barry stood in the centre of the path and waited the captain's approach.

'Are you in want of hands, sir?' he asked, touching his cap.

The master of the brig gave him a swift, searching glance from head to feet, and then, without answering the inquiry, turned to his followers.

'Go on to the end of the wharf. Hail the brig to send a boat ashore, and then wait for me.' His voice was clear and sharp but not unpleasant.

The four men shuffled off, and the moment they were out of hearing he addressed himself to Barry.

'I've just got all the men I want; but I could do with another—if he is anything better than such things as those,' and he nodded contemptuously at the figures of the four seamen. Then, with lightning-like rapidity of utterance, he asked, 'You're not a foremast hand?'

'I want to ship before the mast,' was the quiet answer.

'Got a mate's or second mate's certificate?'

'Yes; both.'

'Last ship?'

'The *Tarava* brig, of Tahiti.'

'Ha! You're used to the island trade, then?'

'Pretty well.'

'Willing to ship as mate or second mate?'

'Yes, and no. Willing enough in one way, and not liking it in another. I'm hard-up, have no clothes, and should cut a sorry figure on such a smart-looking brig as yours when I haven't even a donkey's breakfast to bring aboard if I shipped before the mast; and I'm not the man to stand guying, especially from beauties like those who were here just now.'

Again the captain's keen dark eyes flashed—this time in a semi-approving manner—as he looked at Barry's bronzed face and tall, square-built figure. He stroked his carefully trimmed, pointed beard, and thought for a few moments.

'I want a chief mate for the *Mahina*; the one I have now is seriously ill, and cannot live more than a day or two. When can you come aboard—to-night?'

Barry shook his head impatiently. 'I told you, sir, that I have no clothes but those I stand up in'—

'Can you get what you want right off if I advance you ten sovereigns?'

'Five will do—or three, if you have a slop-chest aboard.'

'The *Mahina* is a trading-vessel (though I'm going to have a try at pearling this trip), and carries a general store, from a needle to an anchor, aboard; but, at the same time, although you can get what you want in the way of clothing, you may want money for other purposes. Are you willing to come aboard to-night and take first mate's duty?'

'Yes.'

'Then take these.' He took two five-pound notes from his pocket-book, and placed them in Barry's hand. 'This is Saturday, and the shops keep open till late. But I rely on you to be here on this wharf not later than midnight. My mate, whose place you will take, is very ill; my crew are a troublesome lot—six of them have deserted; and the rest would clear out to-night if they could. I shall look out for you and send a boat when you hail.'

'I shall be here sooner, if you wish it,' replied Barry; 'but I do not want all this;' and he gave back one of the bank-notes. 'I don't owe a cent to any one; but there is some gear of mine in pawn.'



The captain waved it back courteously. 'Keep it, sir; keep it. We sail early on Monday morning, and you will not be able to get on shore again.'

'Thank you,' laughed Barry. 'I've no doubt I can find use for it.' Then he added, 'My name is Barry.'

'Mine is Rawlings. I hope we shall pull together, Mr Barry'—this with a pleasant smile, as

he buttoned up his overcoat. 'Ha! there is my boat, and I must take my jail-birds on board. Good-afternoon. I shall look for you about twelve o'clock.'

Then, with a polite inclination of his head, he stepped out towards the waiting boat, and left his new chief officer to pursue his way into the city with a light heart.

## THE BOERS AND 'POOR WHITES.'

BY A SOUTH AFRICAN JOURNALIST.



It is said there are no poor in South Africa. This is, to some extent, a fallacy; and the existence of the class of Boers known as the 'poor whites,' which have proved for many years a source of constant trouble and concern to the colonial politician, belies the optimistic idea. The Boers who come under this designation have been gradually increasing in number, and now comprise far too high a proportion of the Dutch in the country. Though many remedies have been suggested for alleviating their dire distress, up to the present time no adequate measures have been discovered which will satisfactorily meet the exigency; so the 'poor white' problem still remains unsolved. The purpose of this article is to discuss, as briefly as possible, the probable position of the poorer Boers after the termination of the present war, the issue of which will undoubtedly be a victory for British pluck and arms. But it will be necessary first to give some explanation of the meaning and origin of the term 'poor whites;' and to obtain this information the reader must take a retrospective glance at the earlier stages of South African history.

In the early days a Boer easily acquired an immense extent of land, which furnished grazing for his stock and gave him his small summer harvest, ample for his simple wants. But subsequently these acres were divided amongst the children, and again subdivided; and so the cutting-up process continued until, finally, the present generation possess, in too many instances, merely a plot of ground and a few stock, upon which even the most industrious Boer could barely support himself and his family. Thus, broadly speaking, originated the class of Boers termed 'poor whites'—the degenerate descendants of the stalwart, hard-working Dutch pioneer. These unfortunate people have not only suffered from the curtailing of their ancestral domains, but have too often lost the finer qualities of their gallant forefathers; and intellectually, morally, and physically they are of an inferior order. At present the condition of the lowest grade of Boer may be classed on an equality with the Kaffir in his uncivilised state; they are un-

educated, ignorant of the most simple matters, filthy in their habits, and frequently live in remote and isolated places where little intelligence reaches them of what is occurring within a radius of a few miles of their homes. Amongst them idiocy and deformity are too often visible, which have been traced, to some extent, to the intermarriages that have been going on unchecked.

Yet to all the attempts of those who, from motives of commiseration, are anxious to raise them from the level to which they have sunk, their pride offers a serious obstacle. It must seem strange that a class so degraded should still retain this pride of race. Perhaps it is a strain of the blood bequeathed to them by their high-minded ancestors; but if so, its purity has been so polluted in transmission as to be almost unrecognisable, for it is a self-esteem that, while it does not deter them from begging, borrowing, and even stealing, will not permit them to perform manual labour because such work is, in their opinion, fit only for the Kaffir, for whom they entertain the utmost contempt. For exactly the same reason the women and girls will not go into domestic service, since many Kaffir and coloured women hire themselves out in this capacity; they prefer to dwell in a hovel, amid squalor and filth, in abject laziness, quarrelling and striving together like animals, rather than perform menial work. Should a belated traveller be so unfortunate as to be compelled to seek shelter for the night in the dwelling of a 'poor white,' he will, in all probability, be invited to lie down on the mud-floor of a narrow, unclean room, where the whole family of both sexes regularly take their rest. How they manage to eke out a living is a mystery; yet it is almost impossible to feel sympathy for them, especially in a case where the parents, sons, and daughters are quite capable of undertaking work of some kind. To help them by donations serves only to encourage them in their idleness.

Progressive farmers greatly dislike their presence on or near their farms; for, while they will rarely accept the employment the farmers may offer, they think it no shame to steal from their flock. It is true that some of the less degraded engage themselves to till all or a portion of a farmer's

arable land, receiving half the proceeds from the sale of the crops; but this arrangement is seldom profitable for the owner, as the Boer is either too lazy or lacks the intelligence required to obtain anything like the full crops the land is capable of producing. When the Boer resides on another man's farm he is termed a *bijwoner*.

A means of earning a livelihood that finds favour with a large proportion of needy Boers is transport-riding; and it is only natural that this should be so, since, from the days of the early 'voor-trekkers,' the Dutchman has been accustomed to drive his span of oxen across the veldt. Attention may here be drawn, in passing, to the dangers associated with the prevailing custom of the driver to jump off and on the rumbling wagon by means of the disselboom, or pole. A false step, a slip, and the unfortunate man is under one of the heavy wheels, when only a miracle can save him from death. Thus the uneventful and unambitious life of a poor transport-rider is frequently brought to an untimely termination.

The foregoing will serve to elucidate the arguments which will be adduced to demonstrate the position of a large section of the Boers when Great Britain will have established her undoubted supremacy in South Africa.

'Poor whites' are mostly found in Cape Colony; Natal is chiefly populated by Great Britain's sons; and in the Republics—noticeably in the Transvaal—the Boer has hitherto been pampered by a sympathetic Government, and has had ready access to the exchequer, filled at the expense of the heavily-taxed Uitlander, where his repeated demands have been satisfied, and the distress about which he wails, brought about in most cases by his own insufferable laziness, is effectually relieved.

The war over, there will be a speedy rush to the much-talked-of country. Great Britain, with her accustomed generosity, will open wide the doors of one of her most important possessions to the whole world, and money, energy, and enterprise will pour in. South Africa will be developed under more favourable and brighter auspices than has ever previously been permitted to it; and for the first time in its history there will be harmonious working between its different colonies and states, the outcome of which must mean prosperity. Progression will be its motto, and he who does not conform to its ruling will be left behind in the fierce struggle for the hidden wealth and the steady keenness of business competition. How will the unlettered Boer now fare? If he obstinately clings to his out-of-

date habits he will be stranded while the tide flows onward, and will only add another to the already superabundant 'poor whites.' He can no longer hope for salvation from his misery in the help of a corrupt Government; the time when such assistance was within easy reach will have passed; and, though he will obtain justice in its full and true sense, and even consideration, the Boer of the Republics will discover that the cornucopia from which he has been served with so lavish a hand will have disappeared.

He who possesses a farm of any value may be induced to part with it, influenced by tempting offers, and live in comfort for the remaining years of his life. But what legacy will he be able to leave to those who come after him? Should he give up all right to his landed property—which in most cases will be turned to far better account than if he retained it—the succeeding generations must suffer. There are great capabilities in the country's soil; but up to the present time agriculture and fruit-growing have not been exploited to any considerable extent, one of the reasons assigned being the backwardness of the Dutch farmer. However, the 'old order changeth, giving place to new;' and here too the Boer must either adapt himself to the altered circumstances or succumb to the inevitable. At no distant date the slow-going ox-wagon will be replaced by the iron horse; and when the transport-rider's services are no longer required, what will become of him? Will he too be ticketed as a 'poor white'?

The 'poor whites' may learn their lesson in time. The South African Governments may be confidently depended upon to do their utmost to teach it; they will show, as they have done already, an eagerness to alleviate the distress of these people, to uplift them from their depraved surroundings, and instil such principles as the dignity of labour, &c.; but until the evil of a petty pride is uprooted from their minds no measures in this direction can become effective. It may be that most good can be done with the children; and by taking them from their isolation and banishment into a healthier atmosphere they may be gradually weaned from their evil customs and habits. But should no practical remedy be discovered for dealing with the 'poor white' problem, then will this unfortunate class of Boers increase in numbers in proportion to the development of the country, and remain a permanent dark spot on the prosperity of South Africa—prosperity secured at the cost of the lives of many of our brave British and colonial soldiers and the expenditure of much treasure.



## THE DIARY OF A BUSACO MONK.

By CHARLES EDWARDES.



INETY years ago—the 27th September 1810—the Duke of Wellington for the first time startled Massena, heavily laurelled Prince of the Napoleonic Empire, into fear that his time had passed, and that he was no longer the ever-victorious son of good fortune. The Prince had surged down the pine-clad valley of the bright Mondego. He was in a hurry, for the country itself was eaten bare. His officers, even, had for weeks been chewing corn like horses, in default of bread. He was also in a particular hurry to drive Wellington and the despised Portuguese in a crushing rout upon Lisbon. In his own mind there could be no doubt as to the issue; and so, when the news reached him that the Anglo-Portuguese army was standing fast at Busaco, he made for it straight, again in fatal ignorance—this time of the terrific nature of the ravines he would have to force, and of the subtle bid for victory at last that Wellington himself had made. The Duke had by then been a week on the Busaco mountain. One of the Carmelite monks of the famous convent—Brother Joseph of St Silvester, to give him his full honoured name—has done us moderns a precious service by writing a diary of the events of the fortnight that made Busaco immortal; and, better still, the diary has now been printed.

One may go to the official reports for an exact account of the pitting of regiments against regiments; but, from at least one aspect, Brother Joseph is better even than Napier. He tells us how the Duke arrived on the 21st, and was not pleased with the room allotted to him, but chose another and smaller one, because it had two doors. 'He commanded us to clean it, and air it with a fire; and while this was being done he went out to survey the whole mountain and the roads as far as Mortagoa.'

Between the 24th and the 27th the Duke had plenty of time to choose his battlefield. Never was man more fortunate in being thus able to rely on the plunging valour of his foes. With his back to the enclosed forest of Busaco, which rises abruptly towards the bare stony summit of the ridge, he took up a position like that of the slanting roof of a house, with no approach for assailants save from the street below. Even Ney, whom difficulties commonly stimulated, though at first eager to attack, was alarmed when he saw what was before him. But that was just another score to us, for Massena hated Ney even as every other French commander in the Peninsula hated his most conspicuous generals; and so word was passed on the 26th that there would be a battle on the morrow. The twinkling fires of the French camp among the woods,

hundreds of feet below the convent, and scattered right and left, with deep, steep gorges between them, responded bravely enough to the challenge of our fires on the clear, strong ridge dominated by nothing nearer than the stars.

In the meantime, however, Brother Joseph had had much to observe and much to lament. The other monks and the few valuables this severe brotherhood allowed itself were, for safety, sent over the mountains to Coimbra. The regular life of the convent was suspended. With soldiers bedded in the church, the sacristy, the library, and everywhere else within the precincts of the sad little place of cork-lined cells, that was inevitable. Further, Wellington objected to the methodical ringing of the church bell in the night and the answering bells of the hermits higher up the forest in their tiny stone huts, with ferns thick in the moss on the shingles of their roofs. 'Never since its foundation,' wails Brother Joseph, 'was there such a disturbance.' Moreover, the great anxiety of the English officers about the impending combat very naturally increased the existing conventual anxiety. The peasants from the valleys of the Dão, the Criz, and the Mondego, fleeing before the French, with their wives and children and trivial household goods, and as eager to rely upon the Church as upon the national army, of course added to the confusion. They camped in the dense forest all among the crosses and hermitages, the trickling streams and fountains, above which the dark cypresses and oaks of this lovely, exuberant spot held their impenetrable screen between Busaco and the sun.

Strong though the situation was, Wellington left nothing to chance. He shocked Brother Joseph greatly by cutting down scores of the venerable trees in the forest, and with these raised barricades in the gateways of the enclosures. Behind the walls themselves, which were dilapidated for the purpose, ambushades were prepared, so that if the French succeeded in gaining the crest of the summit and breaking our line effectually, they might be delayed by a close fire from the two regiments held here in reserve. Lastly, and most significant step of all, well calculated to make Brother Joseph quake to his bare feet, on the morning of the battle the Duke rose at an hour early even for these consecrated solitaires, and hurried all the baggage off in the direction of Coimbra. Massena, in his despatch to Paris after the conflict, describes Busaco as 'unquestionably the strongest position in all Portugal.' But Wellington was then so unused to victory in the Peninsula that, in spite of every preliminary advantage, and his own declared conviction that he would win the day if Massena attacked him, he made ready for the worst as if he expected it.



Brother Joseph, like every one else at Busaco, was also up betimes on this memorable day. But the French rose earliest of all; and when the frightened yet inquisitive monk turned out into the misty air, it was to hear the rattle of musketry and the booming of cannon. This was at five o'clock. The mist aiding them, the French right nobly succeeded in toiling up these mortal steeps. They gained a footing, too; and then, after a brief, stern struggle, their hopes fell with themselves. The Anglo-Portuguese bayonet-charge swept the French back to the razor-edge to which they had climbed against such natural odds. With the lifting of the mist, our artillery also got to work upon them; and then began a carnage which horrified even Napoleon's veterans. The men below were deluged in the blood of those above, and were hurled backwards by the severed legs and arms and heads and the limbless trunks of their comrades, as well as the cannon-shot that wrought this havoc. The dusty earth of the dry ridge lapped up much blood, but more swilled down in runlets to the French soldiers in the chasm, awaiting the orders that were to send them also up that awful incline.

It was now that Brother Joseph's eagerness to see things overcame his cloister-bred timidity. 'About eight o'clock, when I had confessed and said mass, accompanied by another father I went out from the convent to behold the firing. At the gate which is at the foot of the pond I met a peasant weeping. I asked him what was the matter. He replied so that I could scarcely understand him: "Then haven't you seen them?" "Seen whom?" said I. "Those wounded Frenchmen over there," he replied. I went down to the place, and saw such a wretched sight that I began at once to shed tears without being able to help myself. One of them who moved me most had his face shot through by a cannon-ball, which had split his cheeks; the blood ran from his mouth, and a great deal of it had congealed and hung from his lips. Not a word could he speak. The others were not so bad, except four or five who were cut in the middle, and had lost so much blood that they shivered with cold. The English had made a big bonfire, and placed them round it. I hastened from the spot, because I could not bear to see such suffering.'

The good monk must not be judged merely on this naive avowal. He proved later that the privations and self-inflicted tortures of the Carmelite life had not really forced all the commonplace humanity out of him. Though dazed for the moment by this first taste of the horrors of war, he was still a patriot as well as a monk. He was cheered greatly to hear the shouts of the Portuguese *caçadores*, as these challenged their assailants. 'They displayed,' says Beresford, 'the keenest desire to throw themselves upon the enemy;' and Wellington also mentions their 'bizarre firmness.' Brother Joseph climbed the

sierra in as stout shelter as he could find, passing the surgeons at work among the Portuguese wounded, none of whom shocked him like the Frenchmen round the fire down below. But he could not see the battle anyhow without a risk that he did not care to face. The shots of the enemy came right across the sierra, falling even into the middle of the forest, where some of the Portuguese were sitting in reserve, awaiting orders to move to the front. Disappointed, Brother Joseph had at length to return to the convent without having seen anything at all of the actual fight among the pine-trees and asphodels of the hollows and the heather-clad, scarlet-and-gray uplands.

The rest of his experiences of that day better befitted his vocation. He helped the Father Superior to consecrate some ground among the olive-trees, ready for the burial of the dead, and did what he could for the wounded, who were brought past the old stone cross in front of the convent portal, and laid out in the inner court-yards. To all who asked for it he gave wine. One thing astonished him immeasurably. 'Among them all, those at the point of death and the many others in great peril of life, there was not one that asked to be confessed, or even mentioned Jesus in my hearing, as it would be so natural and seemly for an afflicted Christian to do.'

The French general, Simon, who was taken prisoner, was brought to the convent, and much excited Brother Joseph's interest. He had been shot thrice in the face. With him was his secretary, also a prisoner; and to the pair of them was allotted a good room, in obedience to Wellington's command that the general should be treated with all possible honour and kindness. Later in the day a message was sent to Massena for Simon's baggage; and in the morning this arrived, and with it the general's *mulher*, which, in courtesy equal to Wellington's, we would fain translate as 'wife.' By that time the battle was over, and Massena, his ambiguous despatch to Napoleon notwithstanding, had been beaten. 'The English,' he wrote, 'did not dare advance three hundred paces beyond their line of battle.' He did not explain that such an advance would have been a descent into a ravine that would at once have put us at the same disadvantage from which he had suffered at the outset. His own retreat in the night, behind clouds of smoke from the fired heather, was of course also a fine piece of strategy, and not an admission of weakness. The former it may well have been, and it was to checkmate him that Wellington also, on the following night, pushed pell-mell towards Coimbra; a step which enabled Massena to inform Napoleon that the Anglo-Portuguese army was 'in full retreat.' Of this dolorous march under the stars after that bloody day one of his own officers, M. Guingret, has left a poignant and convincing narrative. They moved in dreary silence, broken only by the creaking of theartil-

lery wheels, the groans and shrieks of the wounded, and the harsh cries of the birds of prey that followed them. The dying who died as they marched were set down by the roadside as indications to the rearward troops of the route taken.

On the 28th, according to Brother Joseph, the national army kept up a fire upon the lingering French troops, who showed little energy in replying to it. The Duke stayed at the convent, but rose promptly during the night, and gave orders for an instant march in the darkness and rain towards Coimbra. The Carmelites were advised to retire with the army; and this they did, except Brother Joseph and two others. The next morning, however, our monk was up early to see the last of the troops file off over the mountain towards the deep valley of the Mondego, where Coimbra's red-and-white houses tower in terraces against a background of olive-clad hills. Of the French none now remained except a few cavalry pickets studded about the Mortagoa road; and these also by-and-by vanished among the pine-trees. The chief excitement of this day for the Carmelites was the bringing in on horseback of seventy wounded Frenchmen by some British cavalry, detached to watch the enemy. They had been abandoned by Massena, and were now added to the others in the Chapel of Souls just outside the forest to the north. Before quitting Busaco the Anglo-Portuguese army destroyed a quantity of powder. 'It did us great injury,' Brother Joseph observes. 'It blew down more of the wall, tore up some trees, and smashed a large window in the church.' But there was compensation for the monks in the sight that evening of the very remote sparks of fire which indicated how vigorously the French army had tramped before bivouacking.

The next day, the third after the battle, Brother Joseph was kept woefully in mind of the horrors the French invasion had sown over the land. The British pickets, before leaving, had instructed the Carmelites to see to the wounded in the chapel, especially protecting them from the enraged countryfolk; and also to search the battlefield for others, dead or dying, overlooked in the gorges and scrub of the sierra. Two Portuguese officers also, for no sufficient reason, in Brother Joseph's esteem, stayed at Busaco; and then he asked to go with him in this dismal quest among the heather and rocks. They went a little way, then pleaded fatigue and returned. Brother Joseph continued down to the russet-roofed miserable hamlet of Moura, whence the ravines part all ways like the spokes of a wheel. Here he persuaded three peasants to keep him company; and shortly afterwards they discovered twelve poor fellows almost at the last gasp, after about seventy hours' exposure to alternating heat and cold. They mostly had broken legs and lay in a cluster, groaning with despair and pain. 'No sooner did they see me,' he writes, 'than they lifted their hands to heaven

and began to lament and cry out, "O Mother of God! O Mother of God! Water, water, for God's sake!" After talking a little with them, I asked the peasants who had come with me to go for water; but they replied that they would not, and that they were not obliged to do good to their enemies.' Our compassionate monk, 'grieved to see such inhumanity,' used all the arguments he could think of to persuade his countrymen, with quotations from the Gospels besides. To no purpose. They would not move. Only when he said that he would himself seek the water did they change their minds. There were some bottles lying on the ground, and with these the monk began to descend towards a stream in the hollow. Then the peasants relented. They fetched the water, and one of them, having a mouthful of food in his pocket, gave up that also. Afterwards, anxious to get the Frenchmen under cover, Brother Joseph picked up one of them whose legs were not broken, to try if he could walk. 'But he had lost so much blood from a great wound on the top of the head, and he was so weak, that he could not take a step, and fell down senseless.' Not until the following morning were these poor fellows removed, nursed, and fed on bread and wine and salt-fish, save three, who died in the night.

The next day, being the 1st of October, brought closer news of the French, some of whom were only a mile or two from the convent, 'which troubled us much.' But there was other trouble for the monks. They did not know how to get rid of the Portuguese captain of artillery and the lieutenant of *caçadores*, who had 'pressed themselves upon us with an air of friendliness, and whom we had supplied with food, although they were strangers to us, and really did us no service whatever.' The two monks confabulated, and decided to use the one anxiety as a means of ousting the other. They sought the officers and told them they had decided to shut up the convent and go after the national army; 'although,' Brother Joseph admits, 'we had no intention of doing any such thing; because, if we did it, the peasants in the forest would pillage the place, and treat it worse than the French.' It behoved them, however, to play their part; and so they made a pretence of packing. The officers objected, saying that the French would not come to the convent, and scoffing at the reports of their nearness. The convent servants inopportunely joined in the conference, and declared they too would not go, because they were kneading the bread for the day, and could not leave it. These, however, Brother Joseph drew on one side that they might understand the pious fraud, which, when they heard of it, delighted them, 'for they were as disgusted with such guests as we were—fellows who spent their time sneaking about the battlefield, picking up weapons and ammunition, and eating and drink-

ing at our expense.' The servants then promptly ran for their things and made as if they were ready to start at once. But again the officers demurred. They wished to breakfast first. 'I told them that there was no time for that. They might drink a drop of wine, but nothing more.' An old horse was brought up to be loaded, and Brother Joseph went off to the buttery to draw the wine, when of a sudden there was a noise as of cavalry approaching, and the convent gate was hastily shut. The enemy had come. Returning to the others, Brother Joseph, in spite of his trepidation, straightway triumphed over his undesirable guests. "Your excellencies said that we should not see the French here. Well, there they are!" and I pointed with my hand where they could be seen outside.

The French occupation of the convent was destined to yield mingled sensations of pleasure and deep pain for the three monks left in residence. In the beginning Brother Joseph, who went out to them, was charmed with their politeness. 'One of them, as soon as they arrived, took off his hat and saluted me with much courtesy in the Portuguese manner.' This done, they proceeded to inquire about the contents of the convent. The monk protested that there were no provisions. They doubted him, and at the hint that some one of consequence would soon come up to see if he had spoken the truth, he invited them into the establishment. 'Senhor officer,' I said, 'dismount in order that I may show you the whole convent.' The cork-lined walls, the mildewed portraits of dead Churchmen with penitential and other texts on the canvases, and the small dismal rooms of this home of mortification did not interest the Frenchmen for their own sake; but they were glad to find that our monk had told the truth with a certain amount of pardonable reserve. Some sacks of flour, a great pitcher of wine, a tin of biscuits, and fifty salted codfish were sent off at once to some of the troops by the Chapel of Souls, where the seventy wounded Frenchmen lay. This was vexing; but in soothing counterpoise the objectionable Portuguese officers were also tackled. The lieutenant, who was in uniform and wore a sword, was at once made prisoner. The other, to Brother Joseph's evident discontent, had disguised himself so that he was at first overlooked. Then the French officers sat down to a meal of wine, eggs, salt-fish, and biscuits, which satisfied them—as well it might in such times. They asked for cheese and sweets and port wine, but were not greatly annoyed when none could be given them.

While the French officers breakfasted there was trouble outside with the French rank and file, whom our monks were by no means eager to victual. It began with the entreaty for a jugful of wine; and when this was given the others all crowded into the buttery, to the anguish of Brother Joseph's comrade, who feared for the

rest of the wine. Nor would they leave until Brother Joseph threatened to call their captain. 'When they heard this they went out sadly, and the captain coming himself briskened them. There was no more talk of wine. I shut the door at once.' As if to spite the monks for their stinginess, the soldiers then told of certain guns and a barrel of powder they had discovered under the bed in one of the servants' rooms. Of these the captain soon made an end: the former were broken and the latter spoiled with water. There was also a whisper about the undetected Portuguese captain. 'Is he an officer?' the Frenchman asked. The monks saved the gentleman the sin of a lie, and he was made a prisoner like the other; this, too, in disregard of his strenuous protests. 'He even went so far,' Brother Joseph complains, 'as to say that he was my companion's cousin.' But the Carmelite quite declined to help him. 'Go, go,' he said; 'you must do as these gentlemen wish.' And so both the Portuguese officers were marched off.

Brother Joseph does not forget to tell us that, when they left, the Frenchmen saluted them with the same agreeable Portuguese urbanity as when they arrived. Upon the whole, this first visit of Massena's men was bearable enough, especially as the monks could that evening rejoice in a letter which, in the name of a mere officer of Hussars, guaranteed them from further exactions of any kind.

But, as might have been expected, this letter was not so entire a safeguard. The next morning, in fact, Brother Joseph was confronted in the conventual grounds by another troop of some fifty Frenchmen. He felt in his pocket for the protecting paper; and, his action being quite misunderstood, he was at once greeted with a clamour for money. He offered the paper instead, the sight of which had an immediate effect. The leader of the troop assured him he should have no cause for anxiety. He had come, he said, merely to take a muster of the wounded; and Brother Joseph willingly accompanied him to the Chapel of Souls for this purpose. Here the doctor asked for warm water that he might dress the wounds of the men, and the monk returned to the convent, to find that sad events had happened in his absence.

The troopers had started by threatening a lay brother if he failed to give them money. Then they had broken into the convent church, overthrown the images, torn the vestments, and worked other mischief. They were noisily calling for wine when Brother Joseph reappeared. Infinitely pained, our monk ran to a sergeant of the troop, and told him what was taking place. The officer drew his sword and speedily restored order. But retribution had to follow. When the captain and the doctor returned, the culprits were haled forth in the very church itself which they had sacked; and there, on the steps of the high altar, they



were flogged by one of the lieutenants until Brother Joseph interfered, 'being afraid there would be blood.' This over, the officers sat to breakfast, and, like their predecessors, asked for cheese and sweets when nothing but bread and wine and salt-fish were set before them. They also, however, were well pleased even with such a meal, one of them not having tasted bread for a month. To the troopers outside wine was given, with the exception of the ringleaders in the outrage upon the church. On leaving, 'one of the officers asked for some bread to take away with him. I gave him a roll; but he would not accept it unless I gave him more, and he went off with four. We gave the other officers one each, although they did not make bold to ask for any at all.' There was an instructive little scene at the convent gate with a peasant whom the soldiers had pressed into service as guide. The man began to groan, and declared that he was taken very ill, so that Brother Joseph was obliged to procure a substitute. But no sooner had the troopers cleared away into the forest than the guide left off wailing, and asked, 'Are the devils gone?' 'Whereupon,' says our monk, 'we all began to laugh, and he got better every moment, and soon disappeared without saying adieu to any one.'

Our excellent Brother Joseph winds up his narrative with a pitiful summary of the cost to the convent of Wellington's choice of Busaco for a battlefield. He mentions the four dozen candles consumed by his lordship alone, and the use of the best table-linen. To be sure, the Duke when departing had expressed a wish to pay for his accommodation; but the Superior had replied 'that he wished for nothing except peace in Portugal.' Much more vexatious were the loose campaigning ways of the other officers of the national army. A tablecloth, two yellow candlesticks, a large copper water-jug, and some napkins are particularised among articles that marched off with the army towards Coimbra. Also, 'nearly everything of any value that we put on the beds and the tables for the officers disappeared.'

The wounded in the Chapel of Souls were put at the charge of the monks. 'Of these, twelve died. I helped to carry the dead out of the chapel, and the other Father helped to bury them.' The fare for these poor fellows was only such bread and wine and salt-fish as the monks dispensed to the rest of their dependants. But that there *were* sundry little luxuries in the dark corners of the convent we may guess from one very shrill lament raised by our monk against a troop of native soldiers who subsequently foraged the building with great shrewdness. They found eggs and honey, among other things. 'These soldiers were not regulars but militiamen. Though they ought to have been better than the others, they were worse.'

Nor did the cares of conspicuousness thus in September and October of 1810 thrust upon the unwilling brethren end with the year. To their

unfeigned discomfiture, they realised that Busaco was from the day of the battle a famous place, a lodestone for patriotic pilgrims and tourists. 'Before Lord Wellington came here we never saw any English, although they passed by the roads above and below the convent. But after the battle the name of Busaco, whispered everywhere, made itself respectable, the English officers of the army being enchanted with the spot. Not a week goes by but some sleep here. We minister to all their needs and also victual their horses; and we do the same for the Portuguese and the soldiers who call in passing. All this is very expensive to us; but we shall consider ourselves requited if it helps to bring about the peace that is so longed for and is as necessary as life itself. O great God of Battles! deign to grant it to us shortly for Thy glory and our joy.'

Busaco is no longer a monastic property, with hermits' bells tinkling among its mossy stones and dark, cool shades. The Carmelites, who came here in the seventeenth century and lived in silence with pack-saddles on their shoulders like beasts of burden, crowns of thorns on their heads, and gags in their mouths, all for the glory of God, have gone the way of those other monks of Cintra, who also nestled in cork-lined dens just large enough to turn round in. The Busaco woods, however, which to the first Carmelites were 'one of the wonders of the world,' are as lovely as ever they were, and perhaps the more winsome for the many sombre memories that cling like the moss itself to the old gray habitations that stud them. The State has now taken Busaco for its own. The Chapel of Souls is a national monument, with engravings and plans of the battle on its inner walls, and stiff little soldiers of the Portuguese army promenading all day long before its clean white walls and red-tiled roof. Hard by it is the memorial column with a radiant crystal top; eight cannons encompass it, and more soldiers move up and down in eternal patrol here also. Thus Portugal keeps her children in mind of Busaco's battle.

#### THE DAY'S BEST HOUR.

SWEET is the Morn that deepens to a blush  
 Athwart each clear-cut ridge and mountain high,  
 When, on the dewy twigs, the birds all vie  
 In tuneful measures with the glorious thrush!  
 And deeply sweet is Noon, when every rush  
 And nodding blade of grass seems full asleep;  
 When scarce a whisper through the woods doth creep,  
 While distant scenes look hazy, in the hush.

But, poet's hour, loved Eve, whose shadow folds,  
 In peace, the deeper grasses by the mere;  
 Whose crimson flame gives glory to the near,  
 And dapples every height the eye beholds,  
 With fervent glory fringing cape and bay:  
 Thou art the sweetest, lordliest hour of Day!

WILLIAM J. GALLAGHER.



# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### A VISIT TO MAGERSFONTEIN BATTLEFIELD.

By W. S. FLETCHER.



OFFICIAL business calling me to Kimberley during the month of March last, I was afforded an opportune and welcome chance of visiting Magersfontein, a spot that will always be associated with the untoward disaster to British arms in the earlier stage of the South African campaign.

With regard to Kimberley itself, it was just beginning to recover from the staggering effects of its four months' isolation and bombardment. At the first glance, no one would suppose that the place had so recently been subjected to such a unique and disagreeable experience. There was certainly an unusual quietude in the vicinity of the De Beer's diamond-mines, for which lack of coal and native labour were to a large extent responsible; cabs, too, were conspicuous by their absence, the horses having been either handed over to the military authorities or converted into soup and sausage-meat for the half-starved population; while the stock of goods for sale in the stores was of a somewhat limited description. At the same time, general and wholesale destruction of property exists only in the imagination, and anything like structural damage as the effect of the siege has for the most part to be searched out. I noticed only one building—a boot and shoe warehouse—utterly destroyed through taking fire from a shell. A 100-pounder missile had pierced the wall of a photographer's establishment, leaving a hole some three feet in diameter; and in some other places signs of wreckage were observable, but they were by no means so widespread as one would suppose.

I saw one interesting reminiscence of the siege—a placard, in the following terms: 'Sunday, February 11.—I recommend women and children who desire complete shelter to proceed to De Beer's shafts. They will be lowered at once in the mines, from eight o'clock throughout the night. Lamps and guides will be provided.—(Signed) C. J. RHODES.' Hundreds of the townsfolk availed

themselves of this offer, and took refuge in the bowels of the earth from the hurtling shells of the Boer guns. These and other *contretemps*, however, were fast receding into history. Business in the shops was being resumed as usual, and people were even riding about in their carriages, as if there had been no interruption in the routine of social life.

But Magersfontein was our objective, situated nineteen miles to the south of Kimberley, and about two miles away from a little station named Merton, on the direct line of railway from Cape-town. Our party consisted of eight persons, including the General Manager of the Cape Government Railways; and, taking with us a basket in which to deposit the spoils of war, we set out on our interesting journey over level ground, keeping a sharp lookout for such pitfalls as the numerous big ant-bear holes, in which the unwary might easily come to grief. In order that nothing should elude our search, we spread ourselves out in skirmishing order. The first relic that rewarded our search was part of the paper wrapper of a Queen's chocolate-box; then bullets, empty cartridge-cases, an exploded 9-pounder shell, and other trophies turned up in succession.

The glossy foliage of the mimosa-trees was just stirred by a gentle breeze. It was a lovely autumn afternoon; the sun shone down from a cloudless sky. Wild flowers bestrewed the veldt, and the occasional whirr of a covey of partridges made it difficult to realise that so short a time had elapsed since Briton and Boer were engaged here in such a sanguinary conflict, and torrents of shot and shell were falling over the plain.

After rambling on for about half-an-hour, with varying success in the way of 'finds,' we noticed that the ground sloped with a very gentle ascent towards a line of dark, low-lying kopjes or hills, where the enemy took up their position, the highest eminence not being over four hundred feet. The first indication of any warlike opera-

tions was the remains of wire-entanglements, constructed apparently out of fencing-wire, miles of which were broken down on each side of the line of railway. Behind this were rifle-pits, the loose reddish-coloured soil having been excavated to a depth of about five feet and thrown up in front as a protection. These pits extended for many miles in various directions. This brought us to the base of the hills, which are thickly covered with rocks and loose boulders of a brown colour. None of these hills are precipitous, but rise gradually from the plain and command a wide and extensive view of the surrounding country for twenty or thirty miles. On the slopes were cleverly devised zigzag entrenchments, constructed one behind the other in terraces, rendering the position a natural fortress and to all appearance impregnable.

On the side farthest away from where our fatuous frontal attack in December last was delivered was a large number of little scherns or shelters, hollowed out of the soil, with walls of stone on three sides, and roofed over with bushes. Generally speaking, they were about eight or nine feet square, and the occupants had evidently made themselves as comfortable as campaigning circumstances would permit. On the floors were pieces of sheepskin in an advanced stage of decomposition, together with old rugs and blankets; and strewn all about was the most heterogeneous collection of odds and ends imaginable, consisting of bottles, baskets, paper, envelopes, milk and other tins, saddlery, plates, and dishes. The splintered and yellow-stained rock in places bore emphatic testimony to the violent and destructive effects of lyddite, and in one spot we found a huge fragment of a 100-pounder shell which weighed over twenty-six pounds. The very careful manner in which the locality had been ransacked by visitors from Kimberley and elsewhere rendered discoveries of this sort few and far between, although immediately after the battle they were plentiful enough. Among other things there were several tin trunks in good condition lying about, as if the owners had decamped in a hurry without time to pack up. Forks of Brobdignagian dimensions, gridirons, and other culinary utensils, rudely manufactured out of fencing or telegraph wire, were lying everywhere. Many interesting documents, also, were still to be picked up, such as letters from wives and sweethearts, official memoranda, and so on. Here, for instance, is a requisition on the War Department in pencil, and translated out of the Dutch in which it was originally written:

'MAGERSFONTEIN LAAGER,  
Dec. 30, 1899.

'Requisition to the Commissioner for War, for 200 pairs of boots—7 to 11; 100 suits of clothes—4 to 8; 300 shirts; 100 pairs of trousers; tobacco and matches; 200 waterproofs; 100 jackets.  
A. S. SCHOLTZ, Field Cornet.'

Then there was a permit dated, Hoofd Laager, December 26, 1899, to this effect:

'Let this coloured man pass from here to Kochelmander kopjes with 51 sheep and goats for Mr D. J. van Vuuren.

(Signed) A. DE WET.'

The number of empty ink-bottles to be met with seemed to suggest that a pretty extensive correspondence of one kind and another had been going on; while torn Bibles, hymn-books, tracts, and other religious as well as secular literature were among the nondescript assortment of articles littered over the veldt. One metal plate I picked up had a bullet right through the centre, and we noticed a basin pierced in several places. The embrasures where the guns had been mounted were surrounded by sandbags. The positions were admirably selected, enabling the country to be swept for a long distance round.

Altogether, this immense Boer camp was a most novel and memorable sight. One might walk about for hours, prying into the various nooks and corners among the boulders where the Boer army had been located a comparatively short time previous, some object of interest presenting itself at every turn.

What particularly struck me was the absence of any Boer burial-places. Whether the enemy deported their dead or interred them without anything to mark their last resting-place I am unable to say; but, although we tramped over a considerable extent of ground, no graves were to be seen. For purposes of identification, I was informed, the burghers have a number sewn in the bands of their hats and also inside their pocket, this number being duly registered at headquarters, so that relatives and friends can be communicated with.

An officer of the 9th Lancers whom I happened to meet had a most thrilling story to tell of his hair-breadth escape. He went out one day to make a sketch, taking a sergeant with him, both being mounted. When the sketch was partly completed he sent his attendant back to the camp for something. Immediately afterwards he saw ten Boers in the distance. Thinking they had not observed him, he lay partially concealed behind some boulders, when a bullet came whizzing close to his legs. Upon this, thinking it was time to quit, he mounted his charger and rode off as quickly as possible, the enemy in hot pursuit. A second bullet knocked off his helmet, and then his horse was struck and disabled. He rested for about a minute, and then took to his heels and ran for dear life, the bullets coming after him like hail. A wire-fence next obstructed his flight; there was no time to apply his nippers, but he scrambled through as best he could, and then took another minute's rest while his pursuers were negotiating the fencing. He then saw, to his dismay, two mounted men approaching from



another quarter, and at first took them to be Boers; but, as good luck would have it, they were British soldiers. One of them took him up on his horse, and they made off to the camp. Subsequently the Boer commandant, thinking the officer had been slain, sent in a message to the effect that his sword, which he had either left behind or let fall, had been taken to a neighbouring farmhouse, where it could be obtained on application. The officer, who ran for about a mile and a quarter, was so utterly prostrated that it was two days before he could speak. His escape was a perfect miracle.

By the time we had made a good survey of the battlefield and loaded ourselves with as many relics and mementos as we could conveniently carry, the shades of night were commencing to fall and it was necessary to retrace our steps to the station, where we were picked up by the next passing train. All nature was in repose, the stillness of the veldt only broken by the musical chirp of the insects. A beautiful full moon was just rising over Magersfontein as we took our departure, seeming as it were to throw a kindly mantle of calm oblivion over the scarred and bitter memories of the past.

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

CHAPTER III.—MADEMOISELLE X.: HER PAINTER.



WHEN I strolled into the Salon next day, it seemed to me that even before I reached that part which I had come to know so well I became aware of something unusual in it. As a rule I could distinguish the glimmer of the sweet, bright face through the crowd while yet I was far away. It always seemed to be waiting for me. But my very first glance ahead this day showed me that something was wrong.

I walked quickly to the place. Mdlle. X. was gone. Instead of the straight, calm gaze of the eloquent eyes, a patch of bare wall loomed up among the surrounding pictures with all the dull effrontery of a boarded-up window.

I strode away to the secretary and inquired of him what had become of the picture.

'I can tell you nothing, monsieur, except that Monsieur—er—Bidard came in this morning and removed it—against our rules.'

'M. Roussel?' I said.

He showed no surprise at my knowledge of the artist's name, but said curtly and with a depreciatory twist of the mouth, 'M. Roussel.'

'Thanks,' I said. 'I will see him.'

I judged from his manner that he had had quite enough of M. Roussel for that day.

I had no difficulty in finding the Rue Catharine, having made successful search for it on the map before starting out that morning. No. 13 was an old-fashioned, faded, and rather dirty-looking mansion. The *concierge* bade me ascend to the third floor, and there I found M. Roussel's name on a card fastened on the door by drawing-pins. I rapped, and immediately on the sharp '*Entrez!*' turned the handle and entered.

It was a good-sized room, and lighter than one would have expected from the outside look of the house. An archway with curtains led into another room at the back. Canvases of all sizes hung from the walls or leaned up against them. They were mostly portraits. Such as were not

struck me as wild fantasies verging on the horrible. A wood-fire smouldered in a great heap of white ashes on the hearth, and my eye fell instantly on a picture standing against the skirting-board with its face to the wall. Some instinct told me at once that it was the portrait of Mdlle. X.

A tall man in a loose jacket, with his legs defiantly apart, stood with his back to the fire smoking a cigarette. He looked up as I entered, and I was evidently not the person he expected. He was a good-looking fellow, with black moustache and pointed beard; but there was a quick, suspicious white gleam about his black eyes which did not commend itself to me.

'M. Roussel?'

'*Oui, monsieur?*' he replied in a sharp, questioning tone, which said as plainly as if he had voiced it, 'Who the mischief are you, and what do you want?'

'I have come to ask if you are disposed to sell the portrait of Mdlle. X. which you were showing in the Salon?'

'No, sir!' and the black eyes stared at me hypnotically.

'I would be prepared to pay a good price for it?'

'It is not for sale, monsieur?'

'Not at any price?'

'Not at any price.'

'I am sorry for that. I was much struck with it as a most excellent piece of work.'

He bowed and puffed at his cigarette, and showed me plainly that he wanted me to be gone. But I was not to be put off so easily as all that.

'Can I not induce you to reconsider the matter, monsieur?'

He glowered at me for a moment through his smoke, then snatched up a knife from the table, turned to the portrait whose face was towards the wall, and dug the knife through one corner of the canvas. With a quick, nervous motion he

sawed the blade round inside the frame, making a horrible, ragged, rending noise. Then as the picture came loose he rolled it up face inwards, as though he hated to look at it, and flung it on the smouldering fire.

I made a dash at it, upsetting several chairs and an easel in my course, and before he could stop me I had it safely in my hands.

'Now it is mine by right of salvage,' I cried.

The black eyes snapped viciously as he snarled, 'If you take it you steal it.'

'Not at all,' I said; 'I shall pay for it;' and I drew out a thousand-franc note and threw it on the table: '*Voilà, monsieur!*'

For answer he picked up the note, twisted it into a spill, and lighted a fresh cigarette with it.

'Thanks,' I said. 'Now we are quits. You threw away the picture; I recovered it. I threw away the note; you have put it to a very good use.'

The black eyes blazed with anger, and I half-expected he would come at me or send something expressive of his feelings. Instead, he ran his fingers through his hair, and with a change of front which almost took away my breath, and which I could not have imitated to save my life, he said quietly:

'Permit me to offer you a cigarette, monsieur. Keep the picture by all means. It is worthless—like the original.'

'Ah!' I said. 'If one might inquire as to the original'—

'No,' he said. 'It is better for you that you should not know her. She is disgraced.'

'It is almost inconceivable,' I said.

He shrugged his shoulders with a slight wave of the hand which held the cigarette, as much as to say, 'Believe it or not as you choose. It is quite the same to me.'

'I find it difficult to connect disgrace with so sweet a face,' I said again, hoping still to draw him.

'Monsieur is not long in Paris, perhaps?' He smiled, with a gleam of white teeth, which aroused in me an unnatural wish to drive my fist at them.

'Not very long. I have been here about a fortnight.'

'Ah! there is much to learn,' he said, with a touch of insolence.

'But I have had the pleasure of seeing women in almost every country in the world,' I said, 'and I cannot associate anything disgraceful with a face like that.'

But he was not to be drawn. He only grinned meaningly and repeated his shrug.

'Monsieur is from England, I judge, by his accent. Is it not so?'

'From Scotland,' I said.

'That is not quite so bad. We do not hate

Scotland quite so much as England. In the past we were friends at times. *Tenez!* I have painted the beautiful Marie of Scotland. See you!' and he strode to the front windows, where a large painting stood on an easel.

It was a surprising piece of work, and confirmed the views of my friends of the previous night as to M. Roussel's touch of craziness.

Lying on the floor of a room, amid a huge pile of many-coloured silken cushions, was a wizened red-haired woman, with deathly white face, and eyes starting out of her head, while all around her Mary Queen of Scots danced a horrible dance of death. There were at least a dozen Queen Marys—all the same figure in a dozen different attitudes of wild *diablerie*—all dressed alike in a single long white sleeveless garment cut low in the neck, which whirled and flew; but in every figure the soft white neck was cut short, and the head which should have been there hung from the dancer's hand by its long bright hair, and all the eyes of all the heads were fixed, you knew, on the horror-starting eyes of the dying Elizabeth. It was ludicrously ghastly, and how any man could have squandered his genius on producing it passed my conception.

'Strong, is it not?' he said. 'It is for the Salon next year.'

'Very strong,' said I, with a great inclination to vent my feelings in a yell of laughter, and then I felt once more a still stronger inclination to put my fist into his face, for the wretch had used my beautiful Mdlle. X. as his model for the faces of his royal Baccchantes.

'You will have to alter those faces, monsieur,' I said.

'And why?'

'For the same reason that you flung away the original portrait,' I said, 'and also because if those faces appeared, supposing they do take it at the Salon, which I should think unlikely, I would be there the first day to put my stick through every face.'

'Ta, ta!' he laughed. 'Monsieur is wonderfully interested in Mdlle. X.'

'Shall I tell you just exactly what I think, M. Roussel?' I said.

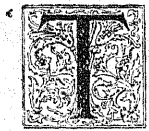
'By all means, if you very much wish to,' he grinned.

'Then,' said I, staring straight into his black eyes, 'I think you're going crazy;' and I tapped my forehead to emphasise my meaning.

It was abominably rude, of course; but he was perpetrating an outrage on Mdlle. X., whoever she was, and I wanted him to know what one man, at all events, thought about it. He said nothing. I waited for an explosion, but it did not come. He stood leaning against the window-frame looking at the picture. I walked towards the door and looked back at him. He had not moved. I went out and closed the door.

## TROPICAL DISEASES AND CURES.

By T. P. PORTER, Jamaica.



HEY who go down to the sea in ships see the wonders of God in the great deep'—see, that is, the sublime manifestations of Nature in her varying moods of storm and calm, and, having eyes to see, realise that the mercy of God is over all His works. But it is a far more comprehensive insight into Nature which is vouchsafed to those who go up into the world's great wildernesses and fraternise with the aboriginal men and brothers who, strangers to the light of civilisation, know no other tutor in philosophy than Nature herself. Such, also, having eyes to see, readily come to appreciate the fact that the mercy of God is not only over but runs through and permeates all His works; that Nature, that is to say, is no mere blind force, no fortuitous combination of accidents, but the manifestation of a Divine will consistently presented in the revelations of cosmography, from the courses of the heavenly bodies to the circulation of sap in the lowliest blade of grass. For they find that, whilst the aborigine bows in awe before, and sometimes even worships, those same orbs whose masses we compute and whose courses we measure, he has, on the other hand, through ages of familiarity and generations of experiment, made his own the most precious secrets of botany; that, taught by Nature, he has created a veritable herbal pharmacopœia of the possibilities of which the scientists of civilisation have scarcely more than begun to dream.

Coming from the abstract fact to its concrete significance, we are at once struck by the circumstance that, despite the great strides of exploration that this closing century has witnessed, the acquaintance of science with the local herbal remedies used by the uncivilised races of the world is so limited. This is all the more curious when we reflect that in all probability in this direction alone lies the secret of that immunity from or means of resisting deadly endemic diseases which can alone render possible the general and permanent advance of European civilisation into the world's tropical waste places. Perhaps the most astonishing thing about this ignorance is, that it is by no means due to oversight. On the contrary, explorers in tropical regions both ancient and modern have noted the effects of the strange and crude but marvellously potent drugs used by aboriginal medicine-men for the cure of such diseases. But for some reason these have never been investigated scientifically. Indeed, whilst our scientists frankly admit that even the famous poisons of the ancients are discounted in subtle efficacy by those decocted by the African or West Indian *obeah*-man or the wily descendant of the

Aztecs, they ignore the complementary beneficent preparations which, if as frankly recognised and properly investigated, might add treasures to the British Pharmacopœia which would arm the medical practitioner against those obscure local diseases—specifically, the most dread malaria—that render the tropics fatal to the European.

In an article which the writer contributed to *Chambers's Journal* last year ('South American-Indian Therapeutics'), giving some account of the effective treatment practised by South American aboriginal tribes for malarial fever, the suggestion was made that the subject was well worthy of the fullest scientific investigation. Since that article was written it has been announced that the British Colonial authorities, with the co-operation of the Royal Society, have instituted a commission to study the subject of tropical malaria; and this suggests that some more general account of the native or so-called 'bush' treatment for tropical diseases might prove of timely interest. Of course it is not to be supposed that any one individual should have been so fortunate (or, from the personal point of view, *unfortunate*!) as to be in a position to furnish the testimony of actual personal experience in many cases falling within the lines of such an inquiry; and the proverbial reticence alike of the Indian *peiman* and the West Indian 'bush-doctor' ever bars the way to deliberate investigation. But for the past twenty years I have been in close touch with the tropics, between the West Indian Islands and Central and South America; and in that time many remarkable facts and suggestive experiences have come within my knowledge that may with propriety be utilised for the purpose. It will be seen that, whilst, with one notable exception, the nature of the remedy or specific remains to be ascertained, the fact of the efficacy of native treatment is indicated in no uncertain manner.

The first question that suggests itself is, What is the nature of malaria, and what are its distinguishing characteristics?—that of its treatment being essentially secondary, albeit of paramount practical importance. Passing the more recondite phase of the inquiry, as to its remote origin and nature—which are theoretically referred to decayed vegetable matter developing a specific micro-organism—malaria is thought to be a spontaneous exhalation of tropical regions generally, but of certain localities particularly, which can in any locality, however comparatively free it might be from the pestilent scourge, be produced in epidemic form by the upturning of the earth. This is frequently, perhaps usually, the result of clearing for cultivation, the cutting of roads through forest swamp regions, and so forth; but



it is interesting to note that the surface disturbance occasioned by severe and continuous earthquake shocks has been known to produce the same effect. A remarkable case in point is that of the Virgin Islands, where, after a long series of earthquakes, beginning in 1867, which very considerably broke up the surface of the earth, and in some places poured up along the shores the marine-silt of ages, quite an obstinate epidemic of malarial fevers followed, although the little islands bore the palm as the healthiest in the West Indies—one medical practitioner for a population of some six thousand having to be maintained by the Government. I have known of similar cases in the interior of Peru, Chili, and elsewhere in South America. But, beyond this general fact, little is known of the nature of the mysterious and terrible disease—or class of diseases—so called, by which practically all lands within the tropical zone are rendered inimical to the life of the average European. The connection of mosquitoes with the spread of malarial fever was considered in an article ('Mosquitoes and the Spread of Disease') in this *Journal* for 1899.

Malaria essentially belongs to the febrile class of diseases; but, primarily at least, it exhibits itself in a variety of other and peculiar forms besides fever ere finally investing the citadel of its victim's health—that is, there are certain effects or symptoms that are popularly referred to malaria which, like the proverbial auctioneer's summary, are too numerous to specify. These comprise, among others, such trifling ailments as glandular and joint swellings (with, or usually without, pain), muscular contractions, cloudiness of vision, noises in the ears, nasal hæmorrhage, and numerous other troubles, some of them being of a painful sort not infrequently mistaken for and treated as rheumatic. Either within my own experience or that of persons with whom I have been intimate, these premonitory signs of malarial infection have been found to be amenable to native or 'bush' treatment, no after-developments having supervened. On the other hand, whilst some systems seem able to resist malaria beyond this point, it is the almost invariable experience, generally speaking, that when these symptoms are either neglected or treated by the ordinary practising physician according to orthodox methods, the febrile development of malaria subsequently occurs.

Such symptoms, it is, however, to be noted, are not the inevitable precursors of malarial fever. Whilst they are usually present, they might not appear in certain cases; and in others, where they do appear, even if not treated, they sometimes disappear in a few days or hours or even minutes. I have known a new arrival rise in the morning with crippled fingers, stiff knees, and chimes clashing in his ears, to appear at breakfast after a cold 'shower' entirely free from the trouble. Apparently it is only when the symptoms linger for several days that real, or rather immediate,

danger is to be apprehended. Of course prompt remedial measures would be in any case the path of safety. But for the most part such measures are unknown; and, even when they are known, some unreasoning prejudice—or shall we say scepticism?—militates against their use. This may be illustrated by the following story:

I knew a fine, healthy young Englishman at Panama who went out to a certain establishment situated in a locality having a bad repute for malaria and yellow fever. In my own observation his two immediate predecessors had succumbed to those diseases. A short time after his arrival glandular and knuckle swellings appeared, and I warned him of their probable significance; but they disappeared in a few days, and he was heedless. Later on more persistent and painful swellings occurred, when I again warned him of his danger, and even urged that he should consult the 'Indian doctor' (the individual mentioned in Sir Henry Blake's official minute quoted in my previous article), as he had probably contracted malaria. This he did not do; and within a week he was prostrated with fever that rapidly developed into yellow fever, which was not epidemic at that time; and, although he had the best orthodox medical care, he succumbed. As the complement to this illustration: I have known and have heard of numerous other cases both of malaria and yellow fever that were treated in all stages with wonderful success by this specialist, often after the regular practitioners of the city had given them over as hopeless.

I have particularly selected these instances for illustration from numerous others within my own experience that might be thought more striking, because they exhibit a qualified medical man who, after having spent fifteen years among Indian tribes in Mexico and South America, studying with trained mind their crude therapeutics and chemically developing the agents, returned to civilisation, and, practically discarding the old *materia medica*, scored signal successes in the treatment of tropical diseases where the best European medical skill seemed at fault. For it is important that it should be remembered that at the period of which I am writing the great Panama Canal works were in full operation, that the whole isthmus was overcrowded with thousands of Europeans, and that the Canal Company maintained a medical staff along with a central hospital establishment which cost nearly one million sterling. The conditions of contrast, therefore, were all that could be desired, and render the results noted as nearly decisive as could be reasonably expected. But other experiences within my knowledge, or that have come to me thoroughly authenticated in the course of my journalistic work, go a great deal farther in the direction of furnishing corroborative evidence of the efficacy of local treatment in tropical diseases.

I have known, in Trinidad and the tropical

mainland of America other than Guiana and the Panama isthmus, time and again, of cases of yellow fever being cured after the medical men in charge had frankly given up the patients as beyond human aid, as much on account of physical collapse as from the direct ravages of the disease. Yellow fever, however, or the symptomatic manifestations so called, is by no means so common in the West Indies and along the Spanish Main as is generally supposed to be the case. There malaria proper, or those other manifestations classed under that dread but little understood generic term, prevail in varying intensity and in different localities throughout the year; and it is to these diseases that the native or 'bush' remedies of which I am more particularly treating apply. In Trinidad, St Lucia, Dominica, the French islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe, and (more than all) Hayti, the claims made for these remedies in cases where 'doctor's medicine' has failed are matters of common report; they have frequently come under my own observation, and have had the attention of many of the best writers on the West Indies. The same may be said of the decoctions of the African fetich-man and the South American *peiman*. Why they have not, long ere this, been scientifically investigated and translated into the Pharmacopœia it is no part of my task to even venture to suggest. But it is certain that any attempt to solve the great problem presented by these tropical diseases must eventually be developed along these lines if it is to be practically successful. That seems to be the path indicated by Nature herself, since the agents are the crude products of common experience and not the finished result of elaborate chemical experiment.

A valuable sign-post, however, may be found in an investigation of the origin of these remedies. Whatever may be said of those used by the aboriginal tribes of intertropical America, there can be no reason to doubt that the West Indian 'bush' medicines, or rather the knowledge of them, originated in Africa, having been brought over by the negro slaves as part and parcel—the best or only good feature—of their remarkable systems of *obeah* and *myalism*. Slowly, but let us hope surely—although that is 'another story'—the gross and degrading superstition, with all its horrific paraphernalia and *diablerie*, is falling away from these systems, at present surviving actively only in Hayti, Jamaica, and Trinidad, and to a less extent in some of the smaller islands; whilst the beneficent part, that conversant with the use, as distinct from the abuse, of herbs, survives—destined, it may be, to partially revolutionise the theory and practice of tropical medicine.

That Nature revels in variety is a well-established fact. It is proverbial that no two leaves in a forest exactly coincide any more than any two faces in a population. Yet it is equally true that Nature's consistency, amounting to uniformity along certain well-defined lines, may be classed

among those eternal verities that form the basis of all true scientific deduction. There is no occasion for surprise, therefore, when we find identical endemic diseases and similar vegetable growths furnishing specific antidotes or cures for them bridging the wide Atlantic, and having their locale and habitat in Africa and America between the same parallels. Such is, in fact, the case; and it seems to be one of those merciful provisions of Providence that somehow are not so generally recognised by man—man, that is, as represented in the arrogance of nineteenth-century science—as they ought to be. But what is even less generally recognised, and which it is my purpose to here indicate, is that the aboriginal races of both continents along these zones have quite independently discovered and practically applied like remedies to like diseases.

Let us take as a concrete illustration of this the native (African) West Indian and South American remedy for yellow fever, of which I have already specifically spoken, and which seems so far to be the best authenticated of the 'bush' remedies. Again quoting from Sir Henry Blake's minute, the remedy announced by Spence in his *Land of Bolivar* (1878) is therein identified as that used by the 'Indian doctor' at Panama, whom I have briefly referred to above. Now, it is a most significant fact that this is precisely the same remedy—*vervain* (*Verbena officinalis*) and Guinea hen-weed (*Petiveria albiacea*)—that is used for the same purpose, and with almost invariably the same satisfactory results, by the much-discredited *myal* or 'bush' doctors of Hayti and other West Indian Islands; which fact I have been at pains to positively ascertain for the purposes of this article. The special significance of it is this: that, whilst the heroine of Spence's 'discovery' and the Panama specialist beyond doubt obtained their prescription from the Indians of tropical America, the West Indians with equal certainty inherited their knowledge from their African ancestors.

Were it necessary to do so, instances of the efficacy of aboriginal therapeutics in the treatment of almost all tropical diseases might be multiplied, culled from the West Indies and the mainland, from Mexico to Peru; only, so far as I am aware at least, the secrets of these remedies, always jealously guarded by their custodians, whether Africo-Caribbean *myal* doctor or Indian *peiman*, have in no case so happily come to light as chance has ordained in that of the yellow fever specific. However, enough has been said, I hope, to indicate that in them we have a clue to the solution of the great problem that is well worth the following. It does indeed seem that the heart of the great tropical wilderness still holds many a precious secret of equal if not superior medicinal value to that which, in the long ago, 'accident' revealed to the fever-stricken Jesuit in dismal Peruvian wilds; and if the inquiry now on foot

can but secure them, we may venture to hope that ere long European science will be armed with the means provided by the Almighty Himself in the great laboratory of Nature for dissipating that awful shadow of death which bars the fair and fertile lands of the tropics to Europeans.

Meanwhile, according to the *Lancet*, a determined and organised attempt has been made to give the British medical man at home adequate opportunities of studying tropical diseases. At Netley and Haslar there are well-equipped establishments for instruction; there is a School of Tropical Medicine, founded under the auspices of the

Colonial Office, at Albert Dock; instruction is also given in tropical medicine at King's College, London, and in Liverpool, where a floor in the Royal Southern Hospital has been set apart for tropical cases. At the annual dinner of this hospital in 1898 Mr Alfred L. Jones, a Liverpool citizen and West African merchant, made an offer of £350 a year to start a school in Liverpool for the study of tropical disease. Donations from other sources were promised. Major Ronald Ross, head of the Malarial Mosquito Mission to West Africa, is one of the special lecturers. This gives opportunity for studying cases of tropical diseases in this country.

## ARRECIFOS.

### CHAPTER II.—THE MAYNARDS.



**A** WALK of a quarter of an hour through the dimly-lighted and squalid streets which intersect Miller's Point and Church Hill brought Barry out into the glare and noise of the lower part of the principal thoroughfares of the city, which, boisterous as was the night, was thronged with the poorer class of people engaged in their Saturday night's shopping. Pushing his way through the crowd in no very gentle manner, for he was both wet and hungry, he at last reached a respectable-looking second-class hotel at the corner of George and Bridge Streets. The house was much frequented by men of his own position in the merchant service, and, as he walked into the comfortable parlour and stood by the fire to warm himself, he was greeted by all the occupants of the room—four decently dressed mates or second mates.

'You look pretty wet,' said an old red-faced man, moving his chair farther away from the fire, so as to give the new-comer more room. 'Why didn't you take your oilskins with you when you went out?'

Barry laughed with the utmost good-nature. 'Because Uncle Levi Harris down the street is taking care of them for me, Mr Todd; and he's got my watch and chain, and my sextant, and some other things as well.'

The four men—mere casual acquaintances of a few weeks' standing—gave a sympathetic murmur, and then one of them, in a deep, rumbling kind of voice, and without even looking at Barry, inquired if he could 'do with a change of togs.'

'Much obliged to you, Mr Watson,' replied the young man; 'but I'll be all right now. I've got a ship; the skipper has given me an advance out of his own pocket, and as soon as I get my watch and other things out of old Levi's I'm going up the town to buy some clothes.'

'You ain't going into a pawn-shop yourself—

are you?' inquired Todd. 'Don't you do it, young fellow. Why, the skipper as gave you the advance might see you going in, and chuck it up in your teeth again some day.'

'Ay, that's true,' said another; 'men like us can't run the risk of being seen even looking in at a pawn-shop window.'

'Well, as I can't get any one to go for me, I must go myself,' replied Barry, who was quick to perceive that, though his companions thought nothing of a man having to avail himself of a pawnbroker's shop, they did think it exceedingly improper to be seen entering or leaving one.

'Leave it till Monday morning,' said another. 'I'll get one of the hands aboard my hooker to go for you if you give me the tickets.'

Barry shook his head. 'I've promised to be aboard to-night, and we sail early on Monday morning.'

'Humph! That's a cooker,' said the man with the rumbling voice; 'there's no getting out of that.' Then, rising from his seat, he walked to the door, opened it, and, turning his head, said, 'Just come here a minute, mister, and I'll tell you how we might manage it.'

Barry followed him out into the passage, and then upstairs into his bedroom.

'Look here,' continued Watson, as he struck a match, lit a candle, and then his pipe, and spoke amidst a cloud of smoke, 'you don't know much of me, and I don't know much of you; but I do know that you're one of the right sort. I could see you were getting pretty well pushed, although you have always kept a stiff upper lip. Now, look there. There's my chest. Help yourself to some dry togs; they'll fit you right enough. Then go out and do all you want to do, and if you have time come back here, and we'll have a glass of grog together. If you haven't—why, it don't matter. I've been on my beam-ends often enough, I can tell you.'

Barry put out his hand. 'Thank you, Mr



Watson. If you'll lend me a suit of clothes I'll feel grateful. I've only those I stand up in, and I'm feeling jolly cold. But I've a good suit or two in pawn with my other gear, and I'll be back here with them in half-an-hour.'

Without another word Watson opened his sea-chest and threw a collection of clothing upon the bed.

'There's shirts, collars, ties, and everything else you want in the chest, and boots under the bed. Blow out the light when you've finished, lock the door, and leave the key in the bar; and if you're on for a yarn when you come back, you'll find me downstairs with old Billy Todd. Welsh rarebit at ten o'clock.' Then, refusing to listen to Barry's thanks, he went out to rejoin his companions.

Immediately he had finished dressing in his new friend's clothes, Barry rolled his own up in a bundle, locked the room door, and hurried down into the bar, where he left the key as directed, and had some coffee and a sandwich or two instead of supper, for he was anxious to return as quickly as possible, and then make his way down to the *Mahina*.

The pawnbroker's shop was less than ten minutes' walk from the hotel; and, stepping briskly along, he soon reached its doors, entered, and went directly to the open counter instead of availing himself of one of the dirty, ill-smelling little confessional-boxes wherein hapless creatures confess their poverty to poverty's father confessor, 'mine uncle.'

When Barry had produced his tickets, a young Hebrew gentleman at once gave him his immediate attention, and one by one the articles were brought and delivered to him after repayment of the money loaned and interest—which transaction took four pounds out of the ten he possessed. His watch and chain were the last to be produced, and as he was winding up the former, before placing it in his vest-pocket, he heard a voice proceeding from the nearest confessional-box, and speaking to one of the assistants, which caused him to start and then listen intently. It was a voice he remembered well—clear, refined, but tremulous with age.

'I can assure you,' it said, 'that it was bought in Calcutta fifty years ago, and cost two hundred rupees.'

'Vell, my goot sir, it doesn't madder nodings to me vat it cost. I dell you dot ve don't advance nodings on dose dings. Ve can not fill up dis blace mit such rubbish.'

'Will you buy it, then? Will you give me three pounds?'

'Vy don't you say dree dousand? Now, I dell you vat I vill do, so as to have no more droubles mit you ven I haf mine pisness to addend to: I vill give five shillings for it.'

'Will you, you sweep!' shouted Barry, striking the wooden partition a blow with the side of his

clenched hand, and then; to the astonishment of the pawnbroker and his assistants and the people in the shop, he seized his parcel, and, pushing open the partition door, kicked vigorously at that of the confessional-box.

'Open the door and come out of this place, Mr Maynard!' he cried. 'I'm Ted Barry!'

In an instant the door was opened, and a little, pale-faced, white-moustached man came out. A faint cry of astonishment escaped his lips.

'Come, sir; take my arm,' quickly said the seaman, who saw that the old man was trembling with excitement. 'Let us get out of this before we have a crowd round us.'

'Yes, yes, Mr Barry,' was the eager reply; 'do let us get away. I feel so upset; and then, too, your voice gave me a shock—no, no; not a shock, my boy, but a surprise—a pleasant surprise.' He pressed his arm closely to Barry's. 'Rose—poor Rose!—will be delighted to hear I have seen you.'

'Where is she?' asked Barry quickly.

The old man halted, and looked piteously into his face.

'She is near here, Mr Barry. We are poor, very poor now. She is serving in a draper's shop.'

An exclamation of pity that he could not repress burst from the seaman's lips. Then he pulled himself together again. 'Let us sit somewhere for half-an-hour, if you can spare me the time,' he said. 'See, there's a good place,' and he indicated a large, brilliantly lighted restaurant on the opposite side of the street. 'I've had no supper. Will you come and have some with me, and we can have a chat?'

'Yes, yes; of course I will, my dear boy. But I must not stay long. I always wait for Rose to see her home, and must be outside the shop at nine o'clock.'

'It is now a little past eight. We shall have something to eat; and then—if you will allow me to come with you—I should like to see Miss Maynard. This is my last night on shore. My ship sails early on Monday.'

'She will be delighted to see you, poor child!—delighted and yet distressed to hear that you are leaving. She has never forgotten you, and we have often wondered why you have not written to us for so long. 'Tis quite a year.'

Barry's face flushed with pleasure, but he made no reply. Entering the restaurant, he chose a table in a quiet corner, and ordered some supper. Then for the first time he was able to observe the thin, pinched face and shabby clothing of his companion. 'Poor old fellow, and poor little girl!' he said to himself; and then, being a man of action, he at once went to the point that was uppermost in his mind.

Placing his big sun-tanned hand on that of the old man, he said somewhat nervously, 'What you told me just now about your changed circumstances has distressed me very much. Will

you, for the sake of our old friendship when I was chief officer of the *Maid of Judah*, accept a small loan from me? Do not refuse me, please. I assure you it will give me the greatest happiness in the world.' Then, disregarding the old gentleman's protestations with smiling good-humour, he forced the money into his hand, and went on volubly: 'You see, sir, it's only a trifle—six pounds—and of no earthly use to me, especially as I'm off to sea again. So, pray, do not refuse me.'

'Mr Barry—my dear boy—you are indeed a generous friend, and a friend in need, but'—and here the tears stole down his withered cheeks as he tried to smile—'I know your good-nature too well. I was always, as my poor wife used to say, a stupid old man; but I am not so stupid as not to know that had matters gone well with you I should not have met you to-night where I did. No, no; I cannot take all this hard-earned money from you; but if you will lend me thirty shillings'—

'Hush, hush, my dear sir! You are entirely mistaken. I am not rolling in wealth, I admit; but at the same time I'm not in want of money, and have a good ship.' Then he added in the most unblushing manner, 'I only went to the pawnshop to redeem these things here for a friend of mine, who couldn't go for them himself. Now, here's our supper, and if you say another word about that wretched money you'll spoil my appetite, which at present is a remarkably healthy one.'

'Then God bless you, my dear boy. Rose will herself thank'—

'If you say a word about the matter to Miss Maynard in my presence, I *shall* be put out,' said Barry with unmistakable emphasis.

As they ate their supper, Barry, whose spirits seemed to become brighter every minute, led the old man to talk, and he soon learnt of the misfortune that had befallen him. An unfortunate mining investment had stripped him of almost every penny in the world, and from comparative affluence he had fallen into deepest poverty. Too old to obtain employment in his former profession—that of an architect—and too proud to ask for assistance from any of his friends who might have helped him, he at last succeeded in securing a miserable weekly wage as clerk with a shipping firm, where his knowledge of foreign languages was of value. For some few months he and his daughter managed to keep their heads above water; then came sickness and consequent loss of his clerkship, and increasing hardships to be endured in their poor lodgings in the poorest quarter of the city. Rose Maynard, with aching heart, saw him rapidly sinking into despondency, as their funds became lower and lower with each rent-day. What could she do to help? Against her father's wish, she had written to his sister in England,

and told her of their position. The sister, a wealthy maiden lady, had sent a five-pound note and a long letter to her brother full of indignation at his 'criminal carelessness,' and suggesting that Rose was quite old enough to go out as a governess to some 'well-connected family, or, failing that, as companion;' and winding up with the intimation that the money enclosed had been sent 'out of sisterly regard, though destined for a far worthier purpose—the restoration fund of St Barnabas's Church.'

Barry ground his teeth and muttered something under his breath. He had often heard Rose Maynard speak of her aunt Martha, who was evidently not a lovable person.

'It hurt us terribly,' continued Mr Maynard; 'but our necessities were pressing, and I decided to keep the gift. Rose, however, begged me not to use it till the following day. Then she went out. She was only away for a few hours, and on her return I found she had obtained a situation in a draper's shop at thirty shillings a week. That very day I returned my sister's gift, urging her to use it for the "worthier purpose." Rose, who cannot help being mischievous, was in such high spirits that she added a postscript, asking her aunt to be sure to send us six copies of the free parish magazine containing the announcement of her princely donation, as it would interest people in Australia; and the wilful girl enclosed sixpence for postage.'

'Bravo, Ro—Miss Maynard!' cried the seaman, leaning back in his chair and laughing heartily.

'Since then we have managed to get along fairly well; but a month ago Rose contracted a low fever, and had to remain at home until the beginning of this week. She is quite recovered now, thank Heaven! and this afternoon, as I was turning over some of the little articles we had saved when our home was broken up, I came across this curiously carved ivory tobacco-box. It belonged to my father, who told me that he had paid two hundred rupees for it in India. Surely, I thought, I can either sell or pawn it for a few pounds, so that when Rose comes home to-night I can give her a pleasant surprise. But, as you know, I was bitterly mistaken; and yet I was about to take the man's offer when I heard your voice. See, here it is.'

The box was certainly an exquisite specimen of Indian carving, and, as Mr Maynard said, of great antiquity.

Barry looked at it admiringly for a minute or two, and then said:

'Do not offer it to a pawnbroker again. I should think it is worth at least twenty pounds. There is a famous collector in Sydney—a Colonel Maclean. Do you know him?'

'No, I have never heard the name.'

'I know him very well; he visits every ship that comes from the South Seas in search of rare

curios. Take or send this to him. He is a wealthy and liberal man, and will give you its full value, or three times as much if he wants it badly.' Then he gave Mr Maynard the address.

Their supper being finished, and it being nearly nine o'clock, Barry paid the bill out of his remaining seven shillings, and left his parcel under the care of the waiter.

The draper's shop was just closing as they reached it; presently one by one the employes came out and stood under the awning, gazing with apprehension at the rain and soaking streets.

'Here is Miss Maynard, sir,' said a young woman pleasantly to the old gentleman, as a tall, slenderly-built girl, closely wrapped in a serge overcoat, stepped out of the shop and looked eagerly up and down the street. In another moment she was at her father's side, her sweet pale face smiling into his. Barry was standing a little distance away.

'Come, Rose, come. I've such a pleasant surprise for you, my child,' he heard her father say, as with the girl he pushed through the little crowd to where his companion was waiting. 'Here she is, Mr Barry.'

'Oh! I am so glad, so glad to see you again,' was all she could say, in soft, trembling tones, as his hand closed around hers; and, simple as were the words, they thrilled the man's heart.

'Glad indeed,' echoed her father; 'glad indeed, my child;' and then his next words sent a chill of misery through her: 'but, sad to say, we meet but to part, and to part almost immediately, for Mr Barry must leave us before ten o'clock to go on board his ship, which sails on Monday. So let us make haste home, Rose, so that we may at least bid him farewell in a better place than the open street.'

Their lodgings were but a few doors away, and in a few minutes all three were seated in the dingy little combined dining and sitting room, which, with two bedrooms, formed their 'furnished apartments.' There was, however, a bright wood-fire burning in the grate, and this gave the place an aspect of cheerfulness. The table was laid for supper, and Mr Maynard, whose thin little face was flushed with excitement, after divesting his daughter of her cloak, placed a kettle on the fire. Then he turned to her with an expression of dismay:

'Dear, dear me, Rose! I have quite forgotten to buy the coffee; and to-morrow will be Sunday. How very thoughtless of me!'

Seizing his hat and umbrella, he bustled off.

'Poor father is quite excited, Mr Barry,' said Rose, with a faint smile; 'but he won't be more than ten minutes. He is housekeeper now. I suppose you know all that has happened to us since'—

'Yes, yes,' said Barry hurriedly, as he rose and, coming over to her, took both her hands in his,

and looked into her pale face. 'Oh that I had only known of his misfortunes six months ago, when I could have helped you! Rose, dear Rose'—

'Don't, don't,' she said brokenly. 'Why do you come to us now, when for a year you have never written? I said to you just now that I was glad to see you. It is not so. Your coming has made me very, very unhappy; for I was trying to forget.'

'For God's sake, Rose, hear me! I cannot now tell you all that has happened to me, for your father will be here presently, and my personal honour is pledged to my captain to be on board to-night, so I must hurry away at once; and it will be impossible for me to come ashore to-morrow. But you shall have a letter from me in the morning that will tell you all and clear me in your eyes, dear.'

The man's eyes glowed with the passionate sincerity of his words, and she uttered a sob of joy.

'Oh Ted, Ted, if you only knew how I have suffered! I could not understand it. It was killing me. If it were not for poor father, I should have been glad to die. And now you are going away again. Oh, what does it all mean? I feel dull and stupid, and cannot think'— Then a burst of tears.

'Hush, little woman! To-morrow my letter will help you to forget the unhappiness I have unintentionally caused you. There, look up, dear Rose, and listen. I hear your father coming. I cannot again part from you without telling him of my love for you.'

'Ted! I shall be the happiest woman in the world then; for then I can talk of you to him when you are at sea. How many long, long months this time, Ted?' and she smiled through her tears.

'Not many, I hope, dear—not more than six, I hope.'

Mr Maynard's step sounded on the landing, and in another moment he came in.

'Here it is, my dear,' he began, and then he stopped suddenly. 'Crying, my child? Poor little girl! you are done up, and weak as well.'

'Indeed I'm not, father. I feel lovely and strong. See!' and she sprang to him and threw her arms around his neck, to his intense amazement.

Then Barry spoke out straightforwardly: 'Mr Maynard, ever since we came out together in the *Maid of Judah* I have loved Rose; and to-night I ask your forgiveness for not having told you so two years ago. But I was waiting till I got a ship of my own.'

The old man gently disengaged his daughter's arms, and held out his hand to the seaman.

'God bless you, my boy! Why didn't you tell me before? Surely her happiness is my first care. And I've guessed it all along.'



## LOCH TAY: A FIFTY-POUND SALMON.

By W. A. SOMMERVILLE.



**A** SALMON of fifty pounds killed with a medium-sized blue phantom-minnow and on a single-gut cast! Once he was a tiny little fish called a parr, and would only weigh one or two ounces; perhaps he was born on one of the great beds of gravel on the Stanley Water, and fed in the shadows cast upon the river Tay by the beech-trees at Meikleour. Then, when he came to be larger and stronger, it is pleasant to think of him making his first journey to the sea:

By thirty hills I hurry down,  
Or slip between the ridges,  
By twenty thorps, a little town,  
And half a hundred bridges.

I have often stood on the bridge that crosses the Tay at Perth, when the river was in flood, and watched the turbid water foam and eddy about the piers; and I have wondered how many times that mighty fish passed under the arches on his journeys up and down the river. Think of his vicissitudes: in the sea, the danger from the seals and the nets; on the river, the nets, the otters, and the poachers who haunt the river at night. How the story of his life lends itself to your imagination! It may be that Sir John Millais, fishing upon the beautiful stretch of water he rented at Stobhall, deceived him with a 'Jock Scott' or a 'Durham Ranger,' played him for a time, and lost him. With what unspeakable relief, and many strokes of his powerful tail, he must have started afresh for his resting-place in the great pool at the foot of Ben Lawers which we call Loch Tay!

The luck of his capture fell to Alpin. Now, there have been other Alpines; but to all who knew him—and they are many—there was, and can for ever be, but one Alpin MacAlpin.

Alpin was the head-boatman at the Killin end of Loch Tay; and as he would stand in the morning on the little jetty in front of the hotel superintending the going out of the boats for the day's fishing, he gave you the impression of all that is pleasing and attractive. If you wanted to go up Ben Lawers, Alpin would take you. No one knew better than he the best places on the loch for trout-fishing. If you wished to purchase a cairngorm, Alpin would sell you one, and you would ever afterwards bear him with tender regard in your memory. Broad-shouldered and of sturdy build, with blue eyes and a frank open face, Alpin was a genius in the art of expressing opinion without in any way committing himself.

'Going to be a fine day, Alpin?' you would say to him.

'Well, I wouldna be for saying no, and I wouldna be for saying yes.'

Goethe says personality is everything. Alpin had a great personality, the perfect mental and physical conditions that made life delightful to himself and delightful to every one with whom he had to associate; and the little village of Killin is poorer now that Alpin has gone, as the one on the Hudson River was poorer when Rip van Winkle went away into the Catskill Mountains.

Mr Andrew Lang, writing recently, has said that perhaps Mrs Gamp is Charles Dickens's greatest creation, painted with the freest brush; and if this is so, it is because of her all-predominating humour. Like Mrs Gamp, Sancho Panza, Falstaff, and Rip van Winkle, Alpin had humour; shrewd, after the fashion of Sancho Panza, he could make you laugh—in this everyday life of ours or in literature a reef of true gold. To be out on Loch Tay with Alpin was to be in the sunshine—days that one would be glad to live over again.

It was in what we may call the coaching-days, before the railway connected Killin with the main-line, that one evening my friend and I arrived from Edinburgh, and seated ourselves in the coach to drive down to the village. There were four of us inside; and one was a great burly man with a beard that swayed like the autumn corn, who looked at us somewhat critically, and then remarked to his neighbour, quite loud enough for us to hear, that other two fools had come to try to kill the big fish. Little did he think, as the coach rolled along the rough road, that one of us would kill the 'big fish,' the largest that till that time had been killed with the rod on Loch Tay, and, as Alpin said, 'another besides.'

There is no form of sport that resembles salmon-fishing on Loch Tay. You have two boatmen to row you; and while they are rowing they talk to each other in Gaelic, a language you probably do not understand. You settle down in the stern of the boat, with rugs to cover you, for the weather is often bitterly cold, and your boat is slowly rowed through the bays and round the promontories of the loch.

It would be impossible for me to tell of all the beauty of the scene: the broken outline of the hills, the dark-green colour of the great companies of pines that seem to rise in columns from the lake, 'to stay the sliding of the mountain snow, to nurse in shade the tricklings that feed the brooks, to give massive shield against the winter wind,' as Ruskin says in the chapter 'On Leaf Shadows' in *Modern Painters*.

Then there is the music that is whispered to

the lake when the lapwings call and the evening breeze comes from the long valley of the Almond or sweeping down from Glenlyon.

You have two rods, one at each corner of the stern of the boat. On the line of each a stone is placed, and if a fish is hooked you will be startled by the sudden precipitation of the stone into the bottom of the boat. You may, if it please you, beguile the time of waiting with a book; but from this most peaceful occupation you are liable at any moment to be plunged into a scene of the wildest excitement.

I remember once driving from Kenmore to Killin when the snow on the roads was so heavy that at the little village of Miltown I had to get the cottagers to clear a way for me, and I arrived late. There was no one to go out with me but an old boatman and a youth who had hardly, I think, rowed on the loch before.

As we were starting, the old man took up one of my rods and asked if I didn't think the reel a 'bit stiff.' There was no doubt about it; the line did not run so freely as one would wish. However, away we went, and, meeting some of the other boats on the loch, heard that no fish had been killed. My old boatman wore a suit of red-coloured tweed; he had dyed the wool and spun the yarn himself. He was speaking to me in praise of this home-made cloth, when suddenly the stone dropped from the line of one of my rods, and away went the line off the reel as if hooked to the Scotch Express. I was on my feet in a moment. As bad luck would have it, the fish was hooked on the line off the stiff reel.

His first run was a long one, taking out line so persistently that it seemed we would have to turn the boat and follow him as best we could. There must have been nearly eighty yards of line out, when at last he changed his course, coming slowly back to us. I was then guilty of the folly of letting him come near the boat, when the movement of the oars alarmed him, and off he went for a second run faster than before; but after he had gone for only a few yards the reel stuck, the rod bent nearly double, and then there was a crash!—

As falls on Mount Avernus  
A thunder-smitten oak.

My rod was broken in two pieces! All hope, however, was not lost; for, taking the line in my hands, I found the fish was still on the minnow. Carefully and slowly I drew the line towards me. We might get him yet!

He came in sight, motionless with the exhaustion caused by smashing my rod, rising slowly towards me like King Arthur's sword from out the mere. Then the trace gave way, and he was gone for ever.

'You'll be taking care, the next time you come to Loch Tay, to have your tackle in proper order,' said my boatman of seventy; and the rebuke was well deserved.

I should say he was a fish of about twenty-five pounds; and it is a striking example of what a salmon can do if you stay his course while he is in full possession of his strength. The rod was about seventeen feet long, and was broken a foot and a half above the reel. I sent for another rod, and in the afternoon we hooked and landed a fish, the only one taken on the loch that day.

My friend had never killed a salmon, and for the first two days he had no luck—the 'nameless Aiguille' had yet to be ascended; and, walking home on the second day, he told me that unless his fortunes soon changed for the better he would go for a climb on Ben Lawers.

On the following day we lunched together on a little promontory that runs out into the loch, upon which a few ragged fir-trees stand like sentinels on guard, red lined against the sky. There are rocks, and when there is a storm you see the waves breaking on them, and the spray rising in clouds of mist:

Roll as a ground-swell dashed on the strand,  
Roar as the sea when he welcomes the land.

My friend decided he would not go to Ben Lawers, but continue fishing. So do our decisions settle the fortunes of our lives. I parted from him, wishing him good luck; and I soon lost sight of his boat as we rowed away towards the Kenmore end of the loch.

Tugald was the name of one of the boatmen who rowed me, and Tonald the name of the other; and right good friends they were, save when you touched upon things concerning the Church; for, alas! the one belonged to the Free and the other to the U.P. When I happened to be alone with Tugald, and he became confidential, he would tell me that on Church matters Tonald was 'no' right in his heid; and when I would be alone with Tonald, and refer to the same subject, he would tell me that Tugald was 'a silly body.'

Sometimes, to pass the time, I used to read to them, tell them a schoolboy story, or repeat from memory a sermon; they liked a sermon best—not a conventional sermon, but one of the old-fashioned sort. One day when we were in the bay at Ardeonaig I had arrived at the critical point, the very crack of doom, when suddenly the stone fell and the reel gave warning of a fish; and, but for the kindly assistance of Tonald of the U.P., Tugald of the Free would have been in the loch. But neither Free Church Tugald nor Tonald of the U.P. could lure a fish to the boat; and at last we rowed homewards.

I can never forget the beauty of the scene as we approached the march; it was a glorious and never-to-be-forgotten sunset:

Nobly, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the north-west  
died away;  
Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red reeking, into Cadiz  
Bay.

The boats were gathering, the day's fishing being nearly done. In one boat some one was standing up; it was Alpin's boat, and my friend was playing a fish. Gradually we rowed nearer to them until we got within speaking distance. My friend's rod was bent, and he was almost motionless, the fish evidently sulking. I asked Alpin how long the fish had been 'on.' Alpin answered it might be an hour 'and more.' The vagueness of that 'and more'!

I said, 'Well, Alpin, it must be a big fish.' Then came the soft and musical answer: 'May be it will be a big fish, and may be it will be a small fish; it will be time enough to be saying when we see him in the bottom of the boat.'

Now, Alpin was not given to allowing a fish to be played for longer than need be; so I ventured to speak again, saying to him, 'He must be a big fish when you have had him on for such a long time.' There was a twinkle in Alpin's eyes as he said, 'I wouldna be for saying yes, and I wouldna be for saying no.' We rowed away out of speaking distance; Alpin had not committed himself.

It would be nearly an hour afterwards that we gathered at the landing-place to see the fish weighed. He turned the scale at fifty pounds, and was the largest salmon that, till then, had ever been killed on Loch Tay.

Alpin kept the half of the single-gut cast upon

which he was hooked, and would show it with great pride.

On the following day my friend killed a salmon that weighed thirty-three pounds—giving eighty-three pounds for two fish killed on consecutive days. There is no doubt this is a record.

Perhaps no fish will play so wild and give such brilliant runs as a salmon of about seventeen pounds. He has not much weight to carry; a boy of seventeen will, as a rule, outpace a man of fifty. This fifty-pound salmon took one long run and afterwards mostly sulked at a great depth. Once, after nearly two hours of steady pressure, he was drawn near the surface, but had even then strength enough to make another dash for liberty. It was not till another half-hour that he was finally worn out and brought within reach of the gaff. He was a beautiful fish, fresh from the sea, silver in colour, and perfect in shape, deep in the centre, and with a small head. You may at times see such fish at Groves', in Bond Street. These are, of course, captured in the nets, and do not often reach so great a weight.

Trolling for salmon upon Loch Tay is very different from casting with a rod upon a Highland river. But in its way it is a pleasant occupation. You have the scenery of the loch, you may enjoy reading a good book, and it is very restful; perhaps best suited for us 'as the rapid of life shoots to the fall.'

## PARSON PUNCHARD'S PIGS: A SUFFOLK SKETCH.

By Mrs ISABEL SMITH, Author of *The Romance of Mutby Workhouse*.



PARSON PUNCHARD stood by his pig-sties, meditatively regarding their sleek, grunting occupants. It was Sunday afternoon, and he was ready to start for church—an unclerical-looking figure, in spite of his long black coat, cut-throat collar, and tall hat of somewhat antiquated fashion. His round, ruddy countenance told of a life spent in the country air, and the lines about his shrewd, kindly eyes seemed more attributable to sun and wind than time, though Parson Punchard was far on in middle age. 'Tig, tig, tig,' he murmured encouragingly, scratching the back of his favourite sow. He hoped she and her litter of eight-weeks-old pigs would win a prize at the Poulton and Muttingford Agricultural Show the following week. The ferrule of his pastoral staff moved slowly up and down the smooth flesh-coloured skin; then the parson raised himself up with a sigh as a step sounded on the path behind him. It was the Methodist preacher taking a short-cut across the fields to his little chapel in the wilds.

'Good-afternoon, parson,' said the little man in broadest Suffolk. 'Busy with your pigs as usual, I see.'

'Yes, Muttiet; but I'm off to service directly,' replied Parson Punchard, answering the implied reproach in the other's tone as he glanced at his watch.

'Ah, sir, I never think much of the swine,' said Muttiet. 'Remember how the devils were sent into them, as Scripture tells us.'

'Yes, yes, Muttiet; that's true enough,' responded the parson cheerfully. 'But they all perished, you know. Those swine left no descendants. An example of vicarious suffering, I always consider.'

'Well, sir, of course I don't want to preach to you; but I do wonder sometimes'—he coughed deprecatingly: however, believing it to be his duty, he struggled bravely on—'how, with so much sin and misery as there is about, you find time for the pigs—and roots,' he added, glancing towards the glebe, where the Golden Tankard mangolds and Norfolk Giant swedes were shimmering in the autumnal sunshine.

The parson's eyes followed his; but it was with a feeling of pride, not disapproval. Next week the six best of each crop must be pulled up for the show, and win a prize, he hoped.

'Muttiet, did you never hear of St John and



his tame partridge?' he said. 'The more misery there is to deal with the greater the need of something outside it to rest the mind upon. I can tell you, my good fellow, with one thing and another, sometimes I don't know how I could have got along without my pigs and farming interest. I believe'—he raised his antiquated tall hat—'the Almighty knows it too, and lets me have a first or second prize now and then to cheer me, or a "highly commended" to stir me up to fresh efforts.'

Muttiet smiled respectfully and half-sadly. 'Well, parson, it's not for me to judge. I expect we're like a family of children: all want dealing with different. Good-afternoon.' Then he passed on.

Parson Punchard turned and walked back to the comfortable old-fashioned Rectory. He went across the neat, trim lawn, and stepped into a long, low room. Here a fire smouldered in the grate, and an old lady in a white cap sat swallowed up in a big arm-chair beside it.

'Just off to church, mother,' he said cheerfully, but in the tone one addresses an unreasonable child.

'Don't be late, Theophilus,' returned the old lady in a quavering voice. 'You know your father does not like to be interrupted when he has begun. You must be a good boy.'

'Yes, mother.'

'And mind you remember the text.'

'I'll try, mother.'

The old lady appeared to reflect a moment, then she continued her adjurations:

'And, Theophilus, no stopping about after service to play with the village boys. I think it was only last Sunday your father told me you were spinning your top in the porch.'

'I promise I won't do that, mother,' replied Parson Punchard. There was no smile on his face; instead, there was the weary, hopeless expression which sometimes came there, that might have made the Methodist preacher excuse the pigs.

'Ah, here is Pleasance to keep you company,' he said more brightly, as a respectable middle-aged servant entered the room, and he took the opportunity to slip away.

The parson started briskly along the quiet lane which led to Poulton Church. The mud was thick underfoot; but the brambles and hips were a brilliant flame-colour, and there was a blue sky above the golden-tinted trees.

By-and-by he came to the outskirts of the Hall plantation. Here Parson Punchard's pace involuntarily slackened, and from time to time he glanced between the tree-trunks as if in search of some one. The worn look on his face gave way to one of pleasurable expectation. A very little sufficed to make Parson Punchard happy; and the dream of his life was built on somewhat slight foundations. For years he had been a

favoured visitor at the Hall. Once a week at least he went to dine there and play a game of whist with the old Squire and his daughter; and often, when the game was ended, Miss Euphemia would play and sing to him, while her father slumbered in his easy-chair with the dogs at his feet. An evening thus spent was sufficient to cheer Parson Punchard for some days; but there were often chance meetings in the cottages or the village, and almost always on Sundays they had opportunity for a few words. In the afternoon, sometimes, Miss Euphemia would come by a path through the plantation; and the parson always lived in the hope of her doing so. There was no engagement between them; not a word of love had ever been spoken by him; yet he hoped some day—some day—he would receive his life's crown. In the meantime he lived on the fragments, bore his home-burden bravely, and busied himself with his parish and his pigs.

Now he walked on. The church bells were clanging sonorously. If Miss Euphemia were coming to church through the plantation she would soon be there. He looked anxiously over the park-palings. He saw the narrow path which wound in and out of the trees and underwood; but there were no signs of her. Then Parson Punchard began to doubt if she were coming. Perhaps the visitor they had had at the Hall lately—a Captain Waverley, some sort of cousin of Miss Euphemia's—had not yet gone, and she might find it difficult to get away this afternoon.

He had just made up his mind to the disappointment when he heard voices in the distance, and footsteps rustling the dead-leaves. He paused. The steps drew nearer; but they were not on the path near the road. Then he caught a glimpse of Miss Euphemia's gown; some one was with her, and it did not take long to recognise Captain Waverley. Parson Punchard was hidden from their view by a spreading hawthorn; and, from some instinct he could not explain, he stood still, instead of going on, when a few steps would have revealed his nearness.

The next moment seemed like a dream to Parson Punchard. He could not believe his eyes when he saw Captain Waverley's arm round Miss Euphemia's waist, and the look with which she gazed up at him before resting her head on his shoulder. They remained thus, talking in low earnest tones, till a sudden movement startled them and they passed on quickly into the depths of the plantation.

Parson Punchard stooped and picked up his stick, which had made the clatter. His hands were trembling, and a mist was over his eyes. His Euphemia, as he had fondly thought her! No dread of any rival had ever troubled him. There were none about Poulton that could be regarded in such a light; and this smart young officer—Parson Punchard had had no fears of him, he was only some kind of a relation, and far

too frivolous and careless to please such a sensible woman as the Squire's daughter. It was such an upheaval of the cherished hope of past years, such a sudden revelation; he felt quite dazed.

He did not know how long he stood there grasping the lichen-covered palings for support, while a friendly robin perched close by and regarded him curiously. The sound of the church bells tolling-in brought him to himself with a shock. He made an effort to walk on, leaning on his stick, and conscious only of a desire to hide the effects of the blow he had received.

Old Marjoram, the clerk, had tired of pulling the frayed red bell-rope when the parson appeared.

It was dark inside the church, which smelt of damp and matting hassocks. Like most old Suffolk churches, it stood sadly in need of renovation; but the congregation was a scattered and rustic one, quite content with things as they were—Parson Punchard's droning manner of reading and old-fashioned sermons into the bargain.

The sun shone mournfully through the western windows, making splashes of purple and crimson on the yellow walls, and bringing out the pale gold of the royal arms on the front of the gallery.

Parson Punchard never quite knew how he got through the service that afternoon; but he shortened the sermon by knocking off a ponderous fourthly and fifthly of the old divine he was reading. Then came the closing hymn, sung with due pauses between the lines, to the accompaniment of a barrel-organ in an upright case, adorned with flutings of mauve and gold. The released congregation stamped and shuffled down the aisle; the misty autumn air came in at the open doors; then the parson escaped to the musty-smelling vestry to doff his surplice.

Old Marjoram, the clerk, took it from him as usual, and, coughing deprecatingly, observed, 'Have ye heard about Miss Phemie Youell, sir; how she's took up with Captain Waverley that's been staying at the Hall?'

'Yes, Marjoram—that is no news to me,' replied the parson quietly. Then he added, trying to speak briskly, 'The church strikes very chill this afternoon, Marjoram. We must begin the stove, I think.'

'Stove before Michaelmas? Surely not, parson,' cried the old clerk, horrified at such an unorthodox suggestion.

'Well, it depends on the weather,' said Parson Punchard; and he hurried off, leaving his attendant to lock up.

He walked quickly across the field till he got into the lane, thereby avoiding the little knot of church-goers. If old Marjoram knew the news, every one in the parish would; and he did not want to run the risk of being told it again. But there were sons of the prophets at Jordan as well as at Bethel. He had hardly

descended the steep bank into the lane before a horse's hoofs sounded dully on the damp mud, and the doctor—a red-faced, weather-beaten man—rode up to him.

'Afternoon, Punchard,' he shouted in his thick, jovial tones. 'Nice mild weather for the time of year.'

'Yes, capital,' was the response.

'Heard the latest?' continued the doctor, flicking at a brilliant hip in the hedge above him.

The parson nodded and involuntarily quickened his pace.

'Captain Waverley's stolen a march on you, parson,' said the doctor, with the bluntness which characterised his speech as a rule. 'I always thought you and she'—

'I have heard the news,' replied the parson, interrupting him quickly. 'I hope Waverley's a good, steady fellow. Are you going to enter for the trotting hackneys at the show next week?'

'No, not this year. Isn't worth it. How about your roots?'

'Pretty tolerable, especially my swedes.'

'Well, I hope we shall have a good show,' said the doctor cheerfully, and rode off.

Parson Punchard was anxious to get home and be safe from further remark; but he was not in such a hurry that he could not stoop to pick up some acorns for his pigs, and snatch a cluster of tempting fat ones from an overhanging bough. Then he turned into his own domain, and made across the mangold-field to his pig-sties.

Here he paused. The grunting herd, just fed, came pushing up to the fence to greet him. Parson Punchard threw a handful of acorns among them, and watched them struggling for the prize. With what different feelings he had looked at his protégées a couple of hours ago! How the world had changed to him in that short time! Well, he could not blame Miss Euphemia. She was not bound; and if he could have his time over again he would not ask her to be. Perhaps it was best as it was; for old Lady Punchard, as the villagers called her, might last for years, and it would be pitiful to see Miss Euphemia wasting the remainder of her youth in weary waiting. Yes; no doubt it was best. Yet what a blank it made in the parson's outlook! What a difference it would make in his daily ministrations not to feel he was cheered by any distant hope!

He fastened the bolt of the gray-painted gate of the pig-pen. The swine, finding there were no more acorns, returned to their shelter and fresh straw. Then the parson walked slowly towards the house. The old Rectory, with its massive chimneys, peeped out from among the autumnal trees. It looked sombre enough this time of the afternoon, when a gray mist was beginning to rise. The parson sighed; he felt that the mist was closing in upon him, and not only from the outside.



# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### SOME BULWARKS OF EMPIRE.



**V**OLUMINOUS in the aggregate as are the recent contributions to the literature of our Caribbean colonies, elicited by the growing interest in those long-neglected outskirts of the Empire, their value as a factor in the imperial unity of the future has been strangely overlooked. For the West Indian Question is not nearly so much one of the maternal responsibilities of Great Britain to a brood of weakling children—which seems to be the sole view-point of most writers on the subject—as it is one of paramount significance to the future integrity of the Empire. The British public has lately heard much about the industrial decadence of these colonies, and the national sense of abstract justice and fair-play has been widely appealed to on their behalf; but we have heard little or nothing of the claims which they have on the mother-country as the keystone in the arch of imperial expansion as the larger part of the girdle it is the dream of patriots to cast around the world during the coming century.

It is my purpose in the following article to deal briefly with this aspect of the question. Before doing so, however, it may be well to present a concise account of the actual present and past conditions of the islands in their relations to the mother-country.

The British West Indies, as at present arranged politically, comprise six distinct colonial governments—namely, Trinidad (with Tobago), Barbadoes, Windward Islands (Grenada, St Vincent, and St Lucia), Leeward Islands (Antigua, Dominica, Montserrat, St Kitts, Nevis, Anguilla, and the Virgin Islands), Jamaica (with the Turks and Caymans Islands), and the Bahamas. In the days when steamships were a curiosity and the submarine cable a dream of scientists, when the West Indian sugar-plantations discounted the wealth of Potosi's silver-mines, each little island maintained its own political establishment. Those were the days of great prosperity, coincident with and following the stormy period of rapidly suc-

ceeding wars, during which our sea-heroes were building the fabric of empire and inscribing the names of the West Indian Islands in characters sufficiently lurid to be lasting on the pages of history. An indication of their wealth is found in the interesting fact that Jamaica alone, in the course of a few weeks, raised a popular contribution to the expenses of the last French war of one million pounds. Yet while the Jamaica of picturesque Sir Henry Morgan is a familiar figure in British history, and a proud one withal, the Jamaica of Sir Henry Blake and her neighbours had to be rediscovered to this generation, and be accepted with contemptuous tolerance as mere over-seas burdens.

Truly they were dark days that followed the transient splendour of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with the consummation of which the British nation is now asked to concern itself, with a view to relieving the bankrupt colonies in consideration of their contributions to the national supremacy in past times. The edge of the economic eclipse may be said to have fallen on the West Indies with the abolition of slave-labour sixty-one years ago; but other and rapidly succeeding contributory causes are noted, chief among which was the beet-sugar bounty system adopted by the Continental Powers, as was proved in an article recently published in this *Journal*, setting forth the disastrous effect of the bounty system on the West Indies. What is only now beginning to be realised in England, through the force of importunate representation, has long been felt in the colonies—namely, that in so far as the European bounties are concerned the British Free-trade policy is directly responsible for the disasters that have overtaken them. That is, that the free admission of bounty-fed foreign sugar to the home markets proved a mortal blow to the colonial industry.

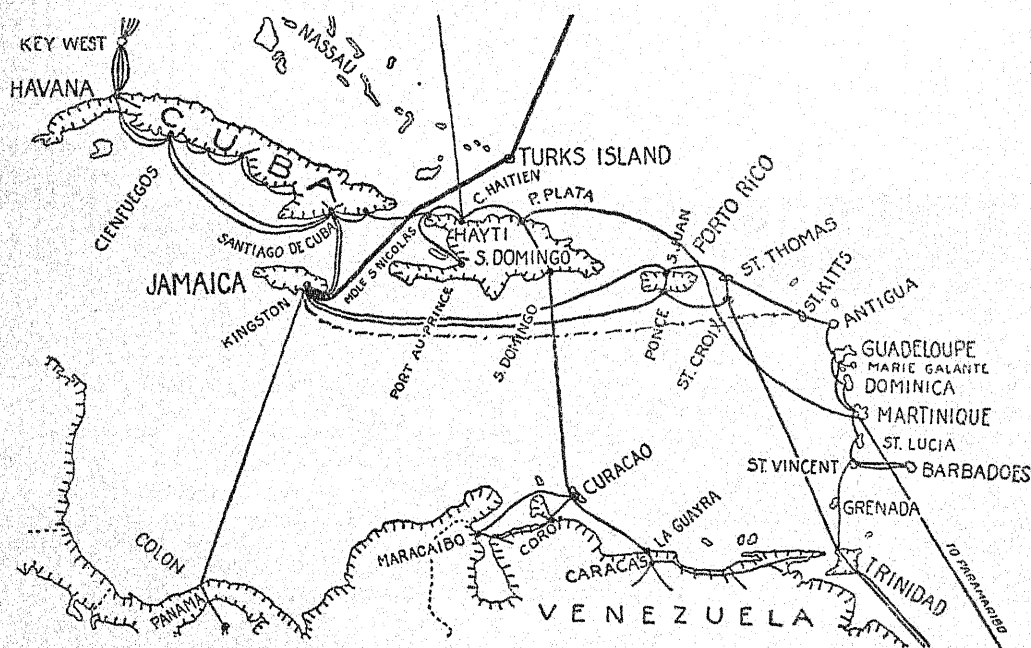
Two important changes occurred during what may be called the development of this decadence, which tended to break up the insular conditions that prevailed among the colonies, and to bring



them into as close a moral as geographical proximity. The first was the introduction of regular steamship communication; the next was the connection of the colonies with each other and with the mother-country by telegraph cable. These could exercise no material influence on the economic decay of the islands; but they brought their peoples into touch, wiped out insular prejudices and rivalries, and rendered possible that community of common interests which may yet prove the foundation of a more solid, and therefore more lasting, prosperity in the future than that of the past.

The first result has been the partial and tentative concentration of the many little governments into the six above enumerated, and there is a

about political discontent, particularly in Jamaica; but the statements are wholly the result of a failure to grasp the points of significance in the situation. Something is also attributable to American imaginative journalism. For instance, an American tourist who recently went through Jamaica was struck by this, and made the following remark: 'Disloyalty, indeed! Why, the widespread, thick-laid loyalty of the people, alike of the masses and classes, as you call them here—of the former to their "Missis Queen," and of the latter to their "Lady Supreme of Jamaica"'—one of Her Majesty's official titles, claimed in Jamaica on the authority of many old documents dating back to the reign of Queen Anne—'would be sickening to my republican stomach were it not



steadily growing tendency toward a far more comprehensive union. The British Caribbean colonies, despite—indeed, it may be because of—their present parlous economical condition, are far from maintaining an unsympathetic attitude toward the aspirations after colonial federation and imperial union. The subject of a West Indian Dominion has been put forward on more than one occasion, and has on the whole been favourably commented upon. One of the latest and most philosophic of West Indian historians, the Hon. N. Darnell Davis, of British Guiana, has incidentally illustrated this in his capital little work, *The West Indian Bundle of Sticks*.

It is a fact that, generally speaking, the West Indians are entirely loyal, and their loyalty is of the enthusiastic rather than the passive type; and this applies to them as a whole, without reference to race distinctions. Much has been said of late

so touching to my human heart. Their loyalty seems more like a physical function than a moral sentiment.

That the British Government propose extending aid to the colonies has been made manifest. This contemplates the restoration of the sugar industry and the development of those minor agricultural industries the possibilities of which have been brought into prominence through the failure of the sugar-markets. Their economic future may, therefore, be said to be provided for. We may now proceed to consider their future political significance in the imperial scheme.

It is obvious to even the most casual student of current history that European civilisation, and with it, inevitably, European political influences and rivalries, are steadily pressing eastward at an ever-accelerating rate of progression. Look at this movement closer and we find that it is

diverging along two opposite channels, both of which tend toward the same objective—the Pacific Ocean. Eastward it trends from Russia through northern Asia, and from Great Britain and the states of southern and central Europe through the Suez Canal and round the continent of Africa. Westward it trends from Great Britain and the United States through North America. Now, this movement makes for the building up of a great Pacific civilisation destined to follow that of the Atlantic as the latter did that of the Mediterranean; and the question of the British, or of the so-called Anglo-Saxon, share in the development of this civilisation is necessarily one of paramount interest to all whose sentiments respond to the scheme of imperial expansion or consolidation.

The geographical distribution of the British Empire gives it a present predominant position in the movement, for it alone already holds territory on both sides of the vast oceanic basin—Canada on the eastern shore, and Australia, New Zealand, India, and several minor but strategically important points on the western side; not to mention the South African strongholds, which, although out of the reckoning from a strictly geographical point of view, are nevertheless of great strategic importance. Add to this territorial standing its far-reaching political and commercial influences in the still independent Oriental nations, and we find ample cause for the operation of that active international jealousy and rivalry which may some day force upon Great Britain a life-and-death struggle to maintain her imperial integrity.

These general conditions of predominance having been the result of a gradual and natural development, they have afforded international jealousy no scope for effective opposition. The fundamental conditions that rendered the growth of the Empire possible, are, however, now rapidly changing. In the Orient itself a new Power has arisen, or matured, with which, either as friend or foe, Great Britain must count; whilst Russia, Germany, France, and Italy are warming to the work of extending their influence in the East, and preparing for themselves a part in the Pacific civilisation at least equal to that they have sustained in the era of Atlantic civilisation. Morally and commercially, the struggle for first place—or possibly it were better to say for place at all—has begun already. The time of the political struggle that must follow cannot, by the most optimistic reasoning, be referred to any very distant historic to-morrow.

The result of the late Hispano-American war introduces another factor into the situation. For the first time the United States appears in an imperial rôle, acquiring, retaining, and administering colonial possessions in the East and West Indies. With her, therefore, as with Japan—whether as friend or foe, although almost certainly

as the former—Great Britain will have to count. This new feature in the situation adds considerably to the already vast, if, indeed, not vital, strategic importance of our West Indian colonies as bulwarks of the Empire.

For years past it has been a recognised fact that the westward trend of civilisation to the Pacific demanded the construction of a ship-canal across the Darien isthmus to complement that at Suez. The idea itself is, of course, nothing new. A waterway across the Panama isthmus was but the perfected realisation of the crude scheme of William Paterson, the celebrated Scotch philosopher and humanitarian, who, more than two centuries ago, projected a great level causeway 'over which the commerce of both hemispheres should roll in stupendous ebb and flow, transhipped between the clouds of white argosies encircling both horizons.' The effort to construct the canal has so far failed; but now that United States imperialism makes it a political as well as a commercial necessity to that country, there can be no doubt about its speedy completion; and the opening of this canal must bring about an important change in the situation in so far as the Pacific sections of the British Empire are concerned.

As a naval Power, Great Britain practically dominates the Pacific now, not alone because of her well-distributed naval and coaling stations there, but also because, in the event of war, she holds the key of its near-by western gateway—the Suez Canal. To maintain this position after the opening of an eastern gateway at Panama or thereabouts it will be necessary for her to hold the key of that also; and how can this be accomplished without immediately precipitating a collision with her jealous rivals, possibly even with that Power on whose friendship through community of interest she must largely rely in the future?

This is a wide and deep question of imperial policy with which, as such, we can of course have nothing to do in an article of this character. It is set forth solely for the purpose of giving force to the argument on behalf of the West Indies. A glance at a map will show that the projected canal lies on the inner side of the Caribbean Sea, which is formed by the symmetrical chain of the Antilles extending from close to the shores of Yucatan in Mexico to those of Venezuela in South America. Although, unlike the Mediterranean, the Caribbean is not a land-locked sea capable of being dominated by an outer Gibraltar and an inner Malta, yet as a possible theatre of naval operations, looking to the dominance of the future canal, it might almost be regarded as a British lake. The northern shores of this lake, indeed, are now practically American, the Haytian element not counting; but, arguing apart from the fact that British and American community of interests will

probably make for an Anglo-American alliance, it will be seen that Jamaica naturally fits the canal as a key does its lock. Not that Jamaica alone, however perfectly fortified, could command the canal even against American opposition were that necessary. It derives its possibilities of invincibility from the support of the minor military stations and naval depôts in the Windward Islands, which are brought within mobilising distance by the all-British cable connection *via* Bermuda, now needing only for its completion a comparatively short section from Jamaica to St Kitts.

When the true significance of these geographical conditions is considered, it does not need any prophetic prescience to foresee that, with or

without the powerful aid of the United States, it is here that sooner or later, during the course of the mighty and perhaps revolutionary international activities of the coming century, Great Britain will have to meet her rivals in a supreme struggle, not only for predominance in the Pacific civilisation, but for the maintenance of her imperial integrity itself.

Thus, then, will the wheel of history once more bring the Caribbean strongholds into prominence, restoring them to their former importance as bulwarks of the Empire. Herein lies the true strength of their claim for special consideration and active assistance from the mother-country in the critical crisis through which they are passing.

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

CHAPTER IV.—MDLLE. X. HERSELF.



**I** WAS delighted to find the picture practically uninjured. The back was merely smoked; the face was not even blistered. I gloried in my treasure, and would not have parted with it for fifty times the trifle it had cost me. I decided not to have it framed till I could give it the place of honour over the fireplace in my own special sanctum in my own home in England, when I had found one and had got settled in it. For now, after ten years of the sea and two of unfettered roving over the face of the earth, my thoughts were beginning to dwell longingly on the delights of a home of my own. It must be a cosy house, not too large, covered with ivy and sheltered by trees. It must face the sea, and have a trim lawn running down towards it, if possible; and I would buy a two-hundred-ton steam-yacht. It seemed to me that amid such surroundings there were the elements, at all events, of peace and happiness.

I must, of course, keep my promise and visit old Mrs Sandbacker out in Los Angeles; but I had not the slightest desire to settle there, not even though she should try to tempt me to it with the whole or a portion of her remaining millions. So, after another week of Paris, I packed my boxes with great content, sent the bulkier ones direct to London, and started for a final leisurely jaunt towards home through Normandy and Brittany, with my beautiful 'Mdle. X.' carefully packed in my portmanteau inside a stout roll of cardboard to prevent her getting crushed. She was my chiefest possession; the sight of the lovely face thrilled me every time I looked at it, and set a glow in my heart whenever I thought of it, which was pretty well all the time. To say that I would have given much and gone far to meet Mdle. X. in person is quite unnecessary. 'Yet,' I said to myself at times, 'perhaps it is as well

as it is. Mademoiselle in the flesh might turn out very different from mademoiselle on canvas. Better the charm of an illusion than a possibly ghastly disillusionment.'

I found the remote, slow life of Brittany very soothing after Vienna and St Petersburg and Paris, and I lingered there longer than I had intended—first for my own enjoyment, and then for reasons of much greater moment. Sombre, time-worn old Rennes delighted me. I made it my headquarters for a time, and thence rode and rambled all over the country-side. Thus it was that, for the second time in my life, fate or luck or Providence threw me a wonderful chance, and, to my lasting benefit and happiness, it did not escape me.

I had been spending a day in Vitre, and came so near to losing the train back to Rennes that it was actually on the move when I leaped through the doors of the waiting-room, almost upsetting the blue-bloused attendant who stood with his back towards me watching the train start. He gave a great bellow of astonishment at my temerity, and so drew upon me the attentions of all the other officials on the platform. A scowling gendarme, gorgeously attired, made as though to stop me; but I dodged him easily. Next I encountered three or four attendants in blue blouses sauntering along with their hands in their pockets, who made surprised and ineffectual grabs at me; but I got past them, sprang on to the step of the rapidly running train, and, throwing back the catch of the carriage door nearest me, turned the handle and drew myself in.

It was a first-class, and had two occupants, a priest and a lady. I leaned out of the window to fasten the lower catch, waved an ironical farewell to my friends on the platform, and then sank down into a seat panting with my run, and in high good humour at having got through.



Before I had recovered my wind I glanced round to see who my fellow-travellers might be, and then— I remember still the catch in my breath and the feeling of intense repression that took hold of me, as though I were gazing on a beautiful bubble which a rash breath might dissipate.

In the farther corner of the carriage sat—Mdlle. X. It was impossible I could be mistaken. Did I not know every curve of the beautiful face, every hair almost of the shapely, well-poised head? That picture had not been in my possession all these days for nothing.

I gazed at her—open-mouthed, I believe—with wonder which was not far from awe, and was certainly very near to reverence. It was truly wonderful and beyond words that, of all the carriages in that train, I should have tumbled into the one that contained the sweet living original of the pictured face that was never absent from my thoughts.

It was Mdlle. X. without a doubt, and yet not just the Mdlle. X. of the portrait. The lovely face was shadowed; the straight, calm eyes gazed, with a saddened look in them, out over the passing country. There was a pathetic little droop at that corner of the mouth which was nearest me. She was in trouble. I wondered what it was, and ached to help her. But in its essentials the face was the one I knew so well and had learned to love so much. I wondered whether the thin-lipped, ascetic-faced old man in the broad-brimmed beaver and long black *soutane* who sat opposite her had anything to do with the trouble; and the possibility that he had made me dislike him. How could he sit there so cold and stern, with never a comforting word or look for the sorrowful girl before him? Later on it occurred to me, in justice to him, that if they had come all the way from Paris, as was probable, he had had ample opportunity of offering such comfort and consolation as might be in him—though, indeed, the grim face did not suggest any deep fount of either—and had probably availed himself of it.

Once, as I sat gazing at her with this rude stare of utter wonder and surprise, the girl turned her head slowly towards me, impelled thereto no doubt by the unconscious impression of my look. But the great, sad eyes rested on me for a moment as unconcernedly as if I had been a stone, and with as little recognition of my being; and when I dared to glance at her again she was looking sadly at the passing landscape once more.

While my mind was still in a whirl at my wonderful and unexpected discovery, the head of the conductor in charge of the train came suddenly through the window alongside me, and recalled me to a due sense of my misconduct.

'I'm awfully sorry to have broken rules'—I began in English; and, though I was looking at him, I got an impression of a sudden start on the part of Mdlle. X., and it seemed to me that

she turned towards us. 'Pardon! I regret, M. le Conducteur, the unusual manner in which I got on the train; but, you see, I was very anxious not to miss it, and, I think, there is no harm done;' and I slipped a five-franc piece into his hand. With a short homily on the enormity of my offence and the risk I had run, he gripped his way along the footboard and left me absolved.

When I glanced at mademoiselle she was looking out of the window again; but it seemed to me there was a tinge of colour in the white cheek which had not been there before.

Before we reached Rennes I had made up my mind what to do, and that was simply not to lose sight of Mdlle. X., come of it what might. They might be going straight on to Brest, or to St Malo, or to Vannes, or to any place on any of the lines leading to these places; but, wherever they went, I was going too, and without their perceiving it, if possible.

They descended at the station at Rennes, and the old priest led the way to the buffet with the alacrity of a keen appetite. I was sharp-set too; and, having ascertained that no train left the station on any of the westward lines for over an hour, I made my way outside, drove rapidly to my hotel, cajoled black-browed Marie, who happened to be on duty in the office, into preparing a dinner-basket for me, packed a few necessaries into a small bag, and within the hour was sitting contentedly in the waiting-room at the station, muffled in a big travelling-cloak, and with a ticket for St Malo in my pocket, since that happened to be the first train to start.

As soon as the doors were opened I strolled straight to the buffet, and, glancing in as I walked past, saw that my two friends were still there, she sitting listlessly at the table with downcast eyes, and the old priest leaning back in his chair, looking much more cheerful than he had done in the train.

I passed on to the *buvette* and ordered a glass of vermouth in anticipation of my dinner, which I would eat *en route*. The St Malo train snorted itself away, the Brest train followed, and a careful outlook assured me that the two were still where I had last seen them. It was along the Vannes line, then, that they were travelling; and, sure enough, as soon as the train was ready, and before the doors were opened, the old priest led his charge along to a first-class carriage, and the conductor of the train himself shut them in, slipping the catch of the door on them. I watched them closely from the door of the *buvette*, noted the carriage they occupied, and as soon as the outer crowd was loosed from confinement and came streaming along the platform, joined it and climbed into the carriage next to them, wondering much where I was going, but well satisfied to go the full journey wherever it might be.

I fell to on my belated dinner, and blessed black-

browed Marie for her ample provision. At every station I kept an anxious lookout; and at the fourth they got down. Allowing them so much time to get off the platform that I was almost carried off by the train, I followed them.

It was a tiny place—Cour-des-Comptes—and the stationmaster was in a state of extreme agitation—I supposed at the sudden rush of business; but later I came to know that he had other reasons.

The village was some distance away; my fellow-travellers had disappeared, and the grinding of rapid wheels in the distance told me that they had been expected.

I set off on foot along the rough country road. It was dark as pitch by this time, and I was stumbling along as philosophically as might be, stubbing my toes on the stones, and at times almost coming to my knees in the ruts—it was just like walking in a watercourse—when I heard a man's rough voice in the darkness behind merrily chanting '*Ma clef, ma clef, qui a chipé ma clef?*' and as the singer came up with me he stopped, with a cheerful, '*Holà, monsieur! You get forward slowly.*'

'Yes; it's pretty rough walking.'

'Come up here on to the bank, monsieur; that is where the cattle go. There, now we shall get on quicker.'

'Ah! thanks; that is better. You see I'm a stranger here.'

'Monsieur arrived by the train?'

'Yes.'

'From Paris?'

'I was in Paris about ten days ago.'

'Ah! a grand place Paris.'

'Yes; a wonderful place. I have been travelling all over the world; but Paris pleased me more than any other city.'

'It is the finest city in the world,' he said enthusiastically, gratified evidently by my admiration; 'but I have never seen it yet. Some time'—

'It is a treat in store for you.'

'Yes,' he said. 'Some time'—

We were on a smoother road by this time, and presently passed over a bridge, with the rush of water down below, and here and there a bead of light gleaming out of the darkness of the banks.

'You are employed at the station?' I asked.

'Yes, monsieur. I am *sous-chef de gare*; but I live in the village.'

'Is there an inn there?'

'Ye—es,' he said, with a doubtful intonation.

'Mother Thibaud can give you a bed—if she will. She's a bit queer-tempered at times. Perhaps I can assist monsieur. I am on good terms with the daughter, you see.'

'I shall be greatly obliged to you.' This was just the ally I wanted.

'Then, if monsieur will take my advice, he will order something to drink as soon as we enter, and show the old one the colour of his money.'

She can't withstand that. She's an old close-fist, is Madame Thibaud; but she loves the pieces, you understand, and she must have a good many by this time; and some time'—

'By the way,' I said, 'I thought I noticed an old gentleman and a lady get out here also. Where have they got to?'

It was curious, but I certainly got the impression of a slight touch of restraint in his voice as he replied:

'Yes; that was the lady of the Château, Mademoiselle des Comptes, and M. l'Abbé Dieufoy.'

'Do they live here?'

'Occasionally, monsieur. Not often.'

It seemed to me policy not to pursue the subject, lest he should arrive at the idea that that was the sole reason for my being there. Evidently he was already on that track, for after a pause he asked:

'Does monsieur make a long stay in Cour-des-Comptes?'

'I am not sure yet. The country is rather pretty round here—is it not?' The depth at which the river ran gave me the idea that it might be so.

'Not bad,' he said; 'but the life is dull.'

'Not so lively, you think, as Paris?'

'Name of a dog! No. If I could live in Paris I would never visit Cour-des-Comptes; and it evidently puzzled him mightily why three people in one evening, who could live in Paris if they chose, should wish to come to Cour-des-Comptes.'

We arrived at the village and at the inn, which seemed a mere drinking-shop. I begged him to order whatever he thought fit for the propitiation of the old lady, to the end that I might get a bed, and we entered.

A number of other blue-blouses were sitting stolidly at the dark wooden tables, automatically lifting and setting down their thick pot *chopines* of cider. There was a murmured 'Good-evening' as we entered; and at sight of a stranger whatever talk had been going on died away into a heavy silence.

My conductor bowed deferentially to the sour-faced old dame, in a very white cap and much blue petticoat, who sat knitting at the far end of the room; and when a pretty, dark-eyed girl came forward to the small table where we had placed ourselves, to request our order, he put his hand over hers as it rested on the table and smiled at her, and she showed no annoyance, but, on the contrary, seemed rather to like it.

'Jeanne, monsieur wants a bed. Can you work it?'

Jeanne's pretty lips pursed up as though to say it might be difficult, and her shapely shoulders gave a tiny shrug as though to say, 'You know why.'

'Meanwhile,' said she, with a family eye to business, 'what can I get for messieurs?'

'I should like some very good coffee, Jeanne, and some fine cognac,' I said. 'I dined *en route*.—And you, *mon ami*?' I said to my friend from the station.

'Nothing beats Jeanne's coffee,' he said, 'and cognac fine makes it heavenly.—*Tenez*, Jeanne! Monsieur will pay for it, and then the mother will be happy.'

I handed Jeanne a twenty-franc piece, and asked her to keep it against my board and lodging for a day or two. Then I offered my own blue-blouse a cigar from my case, and he was absolutely happy. He kept glancing out of the corner of his eye at the progress of matters at the other end of the room, and reporting in a low murmur:

'The old curmudgeon! She's biting your gold to see if it's good. It's all right. Jeanne's making the coffee, and telling the old one she'll see to getting a room ready. If Jeanne sees to it, you'll be all right, monsieur. Heavens! what a cigar this is!—*Tenez*, Vaurel, *mon beau*, just smell this;' and he got up and held it under the nose of another blue-blouse at the big table, a burly fellow with only one arm and a straw-coloured beard and moustache. 'Ever smelt anything like that?'

'Havanna,' growled Vaurel. 'Monsieur did not buy that in Rennes?'

'No; I bought a couple of thousand of those in New York, and I've just about got through them. Permit me to offer you one, M. Vaurel.'

'*Mon dieu*! Two thousand! Why, it is a fortune! Monsieur must have a gold-mine if he does everything else on the same scale.'

I laughed and said, 'I like a good cigar.'

'Who doesn't?' growled Vaurel. 'But we others can't all get them.'

The others along the table looked on with a glimmer of interest in their weather-seamed old faces. They were all old men, and their dripping mugs of cider looked very cold and uninviting. I could not offer cigars to all; but I asked my friend if he thought they would be willing to

join us in coffee and cognac. He put it to them in a *patois* I did not understand, and with a grin all over his merry face. 'Would they? Wouldn't they!'

Only one questioning voice was raised. It came from a shrivelled little old fellow at the far end of the table. His face was thin and pinched, his eyes watery, and his whole aspect very forlorn and broken.

'Monsieur is not a Prussian—is he?' he asked in French.

'Don't be a fool, Père Goliot,' growled Vaurel. 'Don't you think I know a Prussian when I see one?'

'When one has suffered it makes one suspicious,' said the old man in a shaky voice.

'And have not I suffered at their hands?' asked Vaurel.

'No doubt, Monsieur Vaurel; but not as I. My three brave boys'— He put down his old withered head on the table and fairly sobbed.

'Cheer up, Père Goliot,' cried Vaurel; 'times are going to be better. Here come the coffee and the cognac. Be assured monsieur is no Prussian. If he had been I should have known it by this arm of mine which is not here, as soon as his foot came inside the door. I can smell a Prussian a hundred yards away.'

'I'm a Scotchman,' I said.

'There you are, Père Goliot. Monsieur is a Scotchman—do you see? Now, try that coffee; and there are two extra lumps of sugar for you. I shall bring you some fish to-morrow;' and the burly Vaurel got up and patted the old man on the back, and made him sip his coffee till a show of colour came into his face, and he no longer marred the subdued hilarity of the occasion. They all looked as if a little warming up inside would be beneficial to their bodily comfort. I asked Jeanne to leave the bottle of cognac, and their contentment was complete. Even Madame Thibaud grew almost cheerful. As for Jeanne, she hovered around us beaming like a sunset.

## ONIONS OR KITCHEN-LILIES.



NO cook is asked to prepare lily-bulbs for table; yet she does this when she performs her office on the homely onion, which is glibly enough called the root of a very common garden plant. But it is no root—merely a bulb or underground bud, from which the thread-like roots proceed in hairy bunches. Like the potato, it is a tuber or swelling portion of the lower stem. Curiously, the word 'tuber,' which here means an enlarged and eatable growth, has precisely the same meaning and derivation as 'tumour'—a malignant swelling

of animal tissue. The Latin *tumescere* is responsible for both words.

Truly a humble plant of the kitchen-garden is the onion, yet one most wonderful in use and valuable beyond the meagre measure of value accorded it by ordinary cooks and housewives, who have but little conception of the great work it is capable of performing in the human economy, though they certainly look upon it as the vegetable most useful after the potato and cabbage.

The onion comes of a very noble herbaceous family—an aristocratic family—from the stock of



which have sprung many notable scions and lovely offshoots; for the somewhat despised onion is own cousin to the stately lily, whether the Arum or lovely Lenten lily, the lily of the valley, or the fair, floating water-lily—all these are of the great liliaceous race. The onion is also cousin to the daffodil—the gorgeous, golden daffodil or narcissus; it is even allied to the gigantic dragon-tree of Teneriffe, which bears little trace of the seeming frail lily tribe, but nevertheless is a monstrous lily. Thus has the onion illustrious origin, though to the ordinary observer nothing classical or romantic seems connected with its hot presence. It seems quite in the right order of things that ancient poets should sing of lilies and daffodils; and, though none mention the onion, it is deserving of more attention and notice. That Ulysses, on his doleful visit to the 'Country of the Dead,' should see waving fields of asphodels—merely a kind of daffodil—appears quite the right thing; but had those fields been composed of long onion-spikes, shaking in the breeze, one can imagine that the Stygian fields would lose all their suggestive weirdness, and that their grimness would depart. Yet both plants are of the lilies; both own the same original stock.

*Allium* is the immediate family name of the long-descended onion, although there are other *Alliums*, such as the leek, garlic, eschalot, and so forth—all lily species, and yet not one of them fitted, as the stately lilies are, to delight the senses of either sight or smell. Scent in plenty all their bulbs have, but somewhat unpleasant to super-sensitive nostrils, and, in consequence, delicate palates are apt to turn from eating that which might be the health's salvation. To some people there is no more disagreeable odour present in the vegetable world—except *asafoetida*, to which the scent is allied—than that of the onion; this is to be regretted, as it militates against the usefulness of a plant that is in itself almost a medicine-chest, as will be shown.

Before leaving the historical side of the subject, it is suggestive that the national emblem of Wales, which is *Allium porrum*—the leek—should, like the fleur-de-lis and other lilies of France, be of the onion tribe. In heraldry, however, *Allium cepa*—the onion—is unknown; nevertheless it might fitly form part of the emblem of a medical society, as it is pre-eminently a medicinal plant as well as a valuable vegetable. Or as the emblem of a trades-union the bulb would certainly not be out of place, since the very name not only suggests but means 'union.' The name onion comes from the Latin *unio* (one); and the bulb is one of the most perfect symbols of union, since, though but one compact, firm, and strong bulb, it is composed of countless rings or layers of fleshy tissues, in a sense separate and yet joined, that cling in white, silvery foldings, juicy, hot, and very wholesome, round the inner heart.

Many people turn with disgust from the sus-

picion of the onion in any dish at table, whether it be purée, soup, stew, salad, or the bulb plain-boiled. Yet, as has been stated, the onion should be reckoned with as a dietary friend and not an enemy. A hot and keen-biting, ill-savoured friend it may be, but one altogether splendid in its operations, cleansing and opening the myriad minute sewer-ways, in their encasing sheaths of skin, and thrusting out through their proper channels, the pores and other outlets of the body, the foul matters held by the blood. Thus, as a skin-tonic and a restorer of nature's finest, fairest tints to the faded flesh, it is one of the best complexion-revivers in existence. Those who eat the onion may depend on soon possessing soft and supple skin, with firm and wholesome flesh beneath, and pores, freed from acne, working easily and well. Eruptions will disappear under the germ-killing influence of the lily-bulb of the kitchen; and there will be no need for the eaters of it to fear plague or infectious sickness. To microbe, germ, bacillus, whether of the insidious influenza, smallpox, or any fever, the kitchen-lily is a determined foe; disease-germs cannot live in its presence or thrive in human blood charged with its juice.

In remote country villages one sometimes sees an old custom which, in its essence, is wise, though the performers do not know its why or wherefore; as their forebears did, so do they. This is to place plates full of sliced onion at the side of any bed or coffin wherein lies the body of a person dead of infectious disease. This good and shrewd practice was based on the observation of the blackening of the onion and practical experience of the usefulness of the habit, not on scientific knowledge. But the floating germs were attracted to that blackening onion, and settled on the vegetable death-snare thickly, the result being the onion's discoloration and the great purification of the air in the death-chamber. The story is true of a house wherein ropes of onions intended for sale were hung escaping a small-pox epidemic, which attacked the neighbouring houses.

The onion is a killer of germs already taken into the blood. The white corpuscles in the vital current are rendered strong by its presence, and are enabled to enclose and absorb the microbe that else would cause disease, perhaps death. Besides being able to revitalise, purify, and refresh the blood-current, the onion is a most powerful stimulator and cleanser of the stomach and liver, its presence enabling these two organs to do their work far better, by relieving them of disease-particles, and by acting as a strong tonic. Mark the effect on the membrane of the mouth when a slice of raw onion is masticated. Instantly the channels of the salivary fluid are opened, the mouth 'waters,' and pours into the mouth-cavity a perfect flood of nature's first digestive juice, charged with the powerful ptyaline that can con-

vert all starchy substances into the sugar which alone the tissues can absorb. Even the tear-glands of the eyes pour out their waters at the approach of the keen onion, not waiting for any contact; and so it will not be a matter for wonder that the soft, delicate membrane of the stomach-coatings should flush pink and be excited into strong action at the entrance of the biting bulb, which is no sooner received therein than all the gastric glands are set briskly at work, pouring out the second digestive juice that converts all nitrogenous matter into the peptones that the tissues must absorb. No stimulus acts more strongly on the gastric glands than Doctor Onion's juice, and nothing cleans the stomach better. The liver also, feeling the influence, pours out its bile, which mingles with the pancreatic juice in the intestine beyond the stomach proper, to act upon all fats and oils which are dealt with there. Thither goes the fine volatile oil contained in the onion's juice—the first cause of the great dislike to the valuable food. For the bile and pancreatic juice together are able to emulsify all fats contained in the thick chyme that enters from the stomach, so converting it into the thinner milky chyle that can be absorbed by way of the little lacteal channels directly into the blood for further conveyance into the general circulation. But the tiny globules of the volatile oil of the onion are so fine that very many of them escape the emulsification that awaits all fats beyond the stomach-gland, and they are conveyed intact with all their purifying power into the blood-current, in company with the frothy, milky chyle in which they are afloat. Through the skin-passages, even into the air-passages of the lungs, and everywhere, penetrate these little oil-globules, the mighty slayers of all noxious humours in the body, and the cause of the peculiar smell that accompanies the breath of the onion-eater.

No one likes to smell of onions, and herein lies the objection to the bulb, even in the estimation of the most rabid seeker after the beauty health brings. Such a smell is not only disagreeable, but is supposed to indicate a coarse appetite, to suggest all manner of nasty tastes both in eating and in manners. It is only reckoned fitting that ploughboys and clodhoppers should eat of onions; dainty ladies never. Yet the teeth that can work upon the onion are teeth secure from attack of fatal fungi forms that are the cause of quick decay; the eaters are safe from toothache gripe or neuralgic pains, and teeth already in the clutch of ills may have the decay arrested for a long while by the timely use of the all-powerful bulb. What teeth are whiter and stronger than those of the Italian or Spanish peasant? Yet a great onion of the mild type that grows in the warm southern lands will often form the sole dinner of these people of robust health and ivory teeth, who do not mind either the pungent taste or the strong resultant smell exhaling from the vapour

of their breath. For lovely teeth like theirs one ought really to be willing to do more than eat *Allium cepa*, the teeth-preserver.

Is one given to lying awake long o' nights? Then again Nature's compact medicine-chest is at hand where *Allium cepa* is, and the lily-bulb comes forward as a strong soporific, a sleep-giver. For by means of the abundant phosphorus, the free phosphoric acid, contained within its juicy tissues, the onion is a splendid nervine that can calm and soothe the harassed nerves, giving peace and nourishment to the jaded brain, and, by so doing, calming the irritation into rest and inducing sleep. By this good action on the nerves it is that the onion is reckoned so useful in neuralgia wherever that distressing malady occurs.

The onion has also great power in breaking up an incipient cold, as well as in ridding the system of a cold already upon it. For it is a splendid warmth-giver to the blood when eaten raw, and can impart such a glow of heat to the vital current as no other food-substance can give. Of course this is due to the hot acidity of the bulb, the cook will say. But it is partly due to the very abundant carbon which the onion carries in its substance. This carbon is chemically of the same nature as the coal we put in our grates, and its action in the body is practically the same as the action of the coal in the fireplace, since the carbon of the onion fires by natural combustion so soon as it comes in contact with the oxygen in the blood; hence the great heat evolved which strengthens the system and aids it to drive out colds. Catarrhal patients derive enormous benefit from the onion, which, during the influenza epidemic the country lately passed through, was recommended by medical men as a good preventive and curer of the malady; though many patients refused to touch the bulb owing to its unpleasant smell, preferring instead to let the disease run its course and to take the risk of succeeding weakness.

It seems strange that the benefits of the kitchen-lily should not be held to outweigh its one unpleasantness. But it is said that a slice of dry bread eaten after it will absorb much of the odour from the breath; also that the eating of parsley is good for this, as well as the eating of a stick of celery (a form of parsley this, by the way); so none need refuse the onion because of its smell.

It is interesting to make inquiry into the cause of this unfortunate quality of the onion. It is simply due to the presence in some quantity of another mineral matter in the bulb—sulphur. It is this sulphur that gives the onion its germ-killing property, and makes the bulb so very useful a medicinal agent at all times, but especially in the spring, which used to be—and still is in many places—the season for taking brimstone and treacle in old-fashioned houses before sulphur tablets came into vogue.

Now, sulphur when united to hydrogen, one of the gases of water, forms sulphuretted hydrogen,

and then becomes a foul-smelling, well-nigh a fetid, compound. The onion, being so juicy, has a very large percentage of water in its tissues, and this, combining with the sulphur, forms the strongly-scented and offensive substance called sulphuret of allyle, which is found in all the Alliums. This sulphuret of allyle mingles more especially with the volatile or aromatic oil of the onion; it is identical with the malodorous principle found in *asafoetida*, which is almost the symbol of all smells that are nasty. The horse-radish, so much liked with roast-beef for its keen and biting property, and the ordinary mustard of our tables both owe their strongly stimulative properties to this same sulphuret of allyle, which gives them heat and acridity, but not an offensive smell, owing to the different arrangement of the atoms in their volatile oils. This brings us to a most curious fact in nature, that most strangely, yet most certainly, constructs all vegetable volatile oils in exactly the same way—composes them all, whether they are the aromatic essences of cloves, oranges, lemons, cinnamon, thyme, rose, verberna, turpentine, or onion, of exactly the same proportions, which are eighty-eight and a quarter of carbon to eleven and three-quarters of hydrogen, and obtains all the vast-seeming diversities that our nostrils detect in their scent simply by a different arrangement of the atoms in each vegetable oil. Oxygen alters some of these hydrocarbons; sulphur others.

As a bone-maker, as well as a food for brain-workers, *Allium cepa* is unsurpassed by reason of the phosphorus it holds. This phosphorus unites with the lime obtained from drinking-water to make phosphate of lime, the chief constituent in

bone-building. Rich in mineral matter, rich in oil, a warmth-giver, nervine, soporific, brain-builder, bone-maker, germ-destroyer—what appetising food should be more in dietary than the onion, and what bulb should hold a higher place upon our tables?

For the onion is appetising, spite of delicate noses. Served in slices with vinegar, pepper, and salt, what more savoury relish may be found for cold meats or cold fish than the kitchen-lily? What salad is complete without it? What would the cook do without her jar of pickled onions? Cooking eliminates much of the ill odour, but renders the bulb less valuable as an article of diet than the raw onion is. Even the soaking in vinegar renders it less useful than the bulb fresh sliced. Every housewife knows the fried onion—that rich and savoury dish—and knows also that if she would have a rich brown colouring for her gravies she can find nothing better than the fried bulb, more especially if she includes a little of the skin in her frying. This colouring is due to the presence of caramelin, a black substance identical with that found in burnt-sugar when fired for the making of 'black jack,' the gravy-colouring, the value of which is well known to the maker of meat-extracts. This caramelin is due to the presence of carbon in the onion and sugar alike.

Sown in March, using an ounce of seed to each rood of ground, the main crop may be thinned six weeks later; for autumn salads more seed may be sown in July and August. Soot and coal-ashes and a rich soil are loved by the bulb, which draws its supply of carbon from burnt refuse; and plenty of moisture should be given.

## ARRECIFOS.

CHAPTER III.—THE BRIG 'MAHINA.

**T**EN o'clock had just struck when Barry returned to the hotel with a heart as light as that of a boy, and, walking into the parlour, found it occupied by his friend Watson and the three others.

'Here I am, you see, Mr Watson, just in time for a yarn and a smoke before I leave. Will you give me your key, please?'

'Ay, ay, sonny,' said the rumbling-voiced mate, taking it from his pocket. 'Hurry up. Welsh-rarebit in five minutes.'

Hastily changing his borrowed clothes, Barry went into his own room and packed his one bag, which he at once carried downstairs. Fortunately he owed the landlord nothing; and, though he had but three shillings in the world, his face indicated nothing but a supreme content when he rejoined the old mate and his companions.

The Welsh-rarebit and its liquid concomitants

having been duly disposed of, Barry rose and told his friends that, as he must be on board his new ship by midnight, and then had to write a letter, he must leave them. He now shook hands all round, each man wishing him luck.

Watson came to the door with him. 'Got all you want, sonny? Anything I can do for you?'

'Yes. Come into the side-parlour here, and I'll tell you my yarn before I write that letter. I've a full hour, and I can do both in that time.'

'Ay, ay,' said Watson in his deep voice as he seated himself.

'Well, here it is—the yarn, I mean. I came out here to Sydney two years ago, chief-officer on the *Maid of Judah*. There were a lot of passengers. One family—an old gentleman, his wife, and daughter—and myself got pretty thick.'

'Count of the daughter?'

Barry nodded. 'Yes. The skipper was a lardy-



da sort of a chap, and fell foul of me on account of talking to her too much; so he told the girl's mother, who was a silly, brainless sort of a woman, and thought him a perfect gentleman. I knew him better. Between the two of them they made trouble enough for me, though the old gentleman stuck to me, and didn't believe in the skipper. Anyway, the girl liked me best, you see.'

The old mate nodded. 'I've seen a lot of skippers like that. The way women—married women travellin' alone especially—takes to such swabs is agin natur'. I don't understand it—never could.'

'Well,' resumed Barry, 'one day, after we reached Sydney, the skipper and I came to blows—over the girl. I asked for leave—told him I was going ashore to see the Maynards. He said something foul about the girl, and so I dropped it into him—knocked him off the break of the poop on to the main-deck. He was nearly killed. I got two months in jail.'

Rumbling-voice nodded again. 'An' o' course the gal wouldn't recognise you again. Don't tell me. I know something about women.'

Barry smiled. 'But *she* isn't one of that sort, Mr Watson. Both she and her father used to come and see me; the mother hated me. Of course, when I came out, the owners of the *Maid of Judah* wouldn't have anything to do with me after spoiling the beauty of their curly-headed pet skipper; and so I was stranded for a bit. But I soon got a berth as mate on a brig called the *Tavera*, trading between Tahiti, Valparaiso, and Sydney. I used to write to the girl (whose mother had died meantime), and I was putting by money. Then I got into another mess.'

'Woman?' queried Watson, puffing solemnly at his pipe.

'No,' answered Barry hotly. 'Didn't I tell you that I used to write to *her*? I'm not one of that sort.'

'Beg pardon, sonny. I'm an old fool. But what was the mess?'

'I left the *Tavera*—like a blind fool—at Tahiti, and sailed for the Paumotu group on a pearl-shelling cruise in a cutter. We ran ashore on a reef off Ahunui, and lost nearly everything, of course—I was half-owner—and lived on the Paumotus for nearly a year before I could get away to Auckland. Then I came to Sydney—best place for another ship, you know; but I couldn't get one. Had to pawn all my gear to keep myself going. Didn't care to go and see her—you know, under the cires.—afraid of the old woman; I didn't know she was dead. So I booted it around trying to get a ship. Now, here comes the curious part of my yarn. I had hardly got a ship when I—just after I left you this evening—met Mr Maynard. He's broke—lost all his money in a mine or some-

thing. She—the girl, I mean—had to take a berth in a draper's shop. But I've seen her; and everything's all right, and I'm as happy as a sand-boy. Let's have something to drink. I must hurry off aboard, and write a letter to her.'

'Steady, boy! steady about drinks;' and the old man put his hand on Barry's knee. 'I'll have a drink with you with pleasure; but I'll pay for them. I don't suppose you got much of an advance—did you, now? How much have you left?'

Barry laughed, and then told the old mate his story in detail, and confessed to having but three shillings left.

'Mr Barry, you're a gentleman. I hope the girl is one of the right'—

'She is one'—began Barry.

'There—that'll do, my boy. I'm sure she is; a girl who sticks to her father in that way will make the two ends and bight of a good wife. Now, look here. I've a hundred or two in the Bank of Australasia here; and if you want a tenner—ay, or two—you can have it straight away; the landlord will cash a cheque for me.'

Barry gripped the old sailor's hand.

'You're a "white man," as they say here in Australia—a white man to the backbone, and I thank you sincerely—very sincerely; but I don't want it. Yet I'd like you to know Miss Maynard. Here is the address. I'm writing to her to-night, as soon as I get aboard; and I'll let her know you are coming. I had no time to tell her a heap of things—all about our being cast away on the Paumotus, and all the rest of it. Now I must be off—it's past eleven, and I have promised to be on board at twelve. We sail at daylight.' Then he gave his friend some particulars about the brig.

Watson shook the young man's hand warmly, and they parted.

Half-an-hour later Barry was standing on the wharf, hailing the brig. A boat at once pushed off from her side and pulled in. The wind by this time had greatly decreased in violence; but it was still blowing strongly, though the sky was fairly clear and a few stars were showing.

Jumping into the boat—which was manned by four native sailors, and steered by a thick-set, powerful white man, who was wrapped in a heavy coat, and who bade Barry a gruff 'Good-evening'—she was quickly slewed round, and in a few minutes was alongside again. No lights were visible on deck; but Captain Rawlings was standing in the waist smoking a cigar.

'Ha! here you are, Mr Barry,' he said pleasantly, shaking hands with his new officer. 'Come below with me, please. Mr Barradas, hoist in the boat as quickly as possible. Mr Barry, this is Mr Barradas, my second mate.'

Following the captain, Barry entered the cabin, which was large and well lighted. A native

steward was in attendance; at a sign from Rawlings he brought decanters of spirits and two glasses, and placed them on the table.

'Take a drink, Mr Barry. Let us drink success to our voyage.'

'Thank you,' said Barry, and Rawlings clinked his own glass against his in a friendly fashion. Then, as he set his glass down, the captain, still smiling in his pleasant manner, said, 'That is your cabin there, Mr Barry; the steward will put your things in. And now you'll be surprised to hear that I've decided to get under way at once, instead of waiting for daylight. Steward, tell Mr Barradas to get ready to heave up.'

Barry's face expressed his astonishment and disappointment—astonishment that the captain should choose a dark and boisterous night to take his departure, and disappointment at his thus being prevented from writing to Rose Maynard and sending his letter ashore. Rawlings was quick to note the change in his face, and his own features, too, underwent a sudden transformation.

'I expect my orders not to be questioned, Mr Barry,' he said in a sharp, imperious tone.

'Certainly not,' assented Barry. 'I am merely disappointed at being unable to write a very important letter. That is all, sir.'

The captain's smile was back in an instant.

'Can you do it in a quarter of an hour?' he asked.

'Less than that; ten—five minutes will do. I can scribble a few lines at once if you will allow me. But how can I get it ashore?'

'Oh, the Custom-House fellow, the tide-waiter, will take it for you. I'll put him ashore in the dinghy as soon as we begin to heave up. Be as quick as you can, please. Steward, bring writing gear for Mr Barry—quick.'

Whilst Barry hurriedly scribbled a few lines to Rose telling her that the brig was putting to sea at that moment, and that he would write her fully at the first available opportunity, Captain Rawlings paced to and fro in the main cabin, waiting.

'Ah, finished already? The tide-waiter is asleep in his cabin, and I said I would not disturb him till the last moment. But I'll wake him now.'

'Thank you,' said Barry, handing him the letter. 'Shall I go for'ard now, sir?'

'If you please,' answered Rawlings politely.

The moment Barry left the cabin the captain opened the letter, read it, smiled contemptuously, and closed it again. Then he too went on deck, and walked aft.

'Are you ready, bos'un?' he said to a man who, with two others, was standing by the dinghy davits, on the port side.

'Yes, sir.'

'Then lower away; and, here, put this letter in his pocket. Take him well up into the middle of the wharf, and lay him down somewhere under shelter.'

Just as the windlass pawls gave their first clink, the dinghy was lowered, and in a few seconds shot out from the brig's side. Reaching the wharf steps, one man jumped out and held the boat, whilst the other two lifted out the inanimate figure of the Custom-House officer, carried him up the wharf, and laid him down under the shelter of a housed-in donkey-engine. Then one of them, the boatswain, thrust Barry's letter into the man's breast-pocket, and the two left him. In less than ten minutes the boat was alongside again and being hoisted up.

As the brig's forefoot came over her anchor, Rawlings, who gave his orders very quietly, waited for a favourable moment. A gust of wind canted her head away from the shore of the little bay, and in a few seconds her anchor was a-trip, and, under her fore and main topsails and headsails only, the *Mahina* wore round, and began to slip through the water.

As soon as the anchor was secured Rawlings came for'ard and stood beside his chief mate, watching the shore lights.

'That'll do, Mr Barry. We're all right now. With this westerly we won't run foul of anything coming up the harbour. Leave a couple of these native chaps here on the lookout; they can see through a stone wall.'

In less than an hour the brig was between the Heads, and then Rawlings told Barry to make more sail, and gave the helmsman his course, E.N.E.

As the mate called out to the hands to loose the topgallant sails, and half-a-dozen men sprang aloft, the captain turned to Barry.

'Oh, I had quite forgotten those jail-birds. Bos'un, bring a light. Come with me, Mr Barry; and,' he added, 'bring one of these with you,' as he took a belaying-pin out of the rail.

Wondering what was now afoot, Barry followed the skipper to the deck-house, the after-part of which was used as a sail-locker. The door was locked.

'Hold that light up, bos'un,' said Rawlings quietly, as he took a key from his pocket and opened the door. 'Now then, men, come out, and look smart about it.'

One by one the four ruffianly fellows whom Barry had seen on the wharf in the afternoon came out. The tallest of them, with a sullen look at the captain, muttered something under his breath.

'None of that, now,' said Rawlings, and quick as lightning he dealt the man a smashing blow on the head with the iron belaying-pin. He fell full-length upon the deck, and lay there motionless. Rawlings looked at him with calm unconcern. 'Take him for'ard,' he said in drawling tones to the other three, 'and take warning, too. Let me see one of you but look sideways at me or any of my officers, and you'll get a surprise. Off you go.'

Shortly after four-bells had struck, as the chief-mate was seated on the skylight smoking his pipe and thinking of the unnecessary violence of Captain Rawlings, Barradas, who had the watch, stopped in front of him.

'Don't you care about turning in?' he asked civilly.

'No, I don't feel a bit sleepy; in fact, I'll be glad when it's eight-bells.'

The second mate nodded, took a couple of turns up and down the deck, and then stopped again. 'What do you think of the *Mahina*? She can sail—eh?'

'She does seem very fast.'

'Fastest vessel in the Pacific for her size, but a bit overmasted. Think I can give her the royals now; the wind is taking off, and sea going down fast.' Then, after he had given the necessary orders, he began again: 'Heard you were mate of the *Tawera*, mister.'

Barry nodded.

'Then you're used to Kanakas and their ways?'—this half-questioningly, half-affirmingly. 'These chaps here—most of them, anyway—are Kanakas. Good sailor-men, too. Better than those swabs we had to shove in the sail-locker until we got to sea. But I dare say we'll knock some work out of them.'

'Did they try to run away, then?'

Barradas grinned. 'We didn't give 'em the chance. We're short-handed as it is.'

'I heard that half-a-dozen of your men had bolted,' said Barry.

'Did you? Why, who told you? Oh, the wharf policeman. Yes, that's right enough. We did lose six men. They were six of our best men, too—Penrhyn Islanders.' Then he quickly moved away, and, thrusting his hands in his pockets, seemed deeply interested in the man who was loosing the fore-royal.

Presently Rawlings came on deck, and said to Barradas:

'Poor Tracey is dead. He breathed his last a few minutes ago.' Then he addressed Barry:

'My poor mate is dead, Mr Barry.'

Barry jumped up in astonishment. 'I'm sorry to hear that, sir. I had no idea he was on board.'

'Yes, poor fellow,' replied Rawlings quietly; 'he refused to go ashore. In fact, he pleaded so hard with me that I could not resist his wishes. He hated the idea of dying in a hospital, so I gave way to him.'

'What was his illness?'

Rawlings hesitated a moment, and then answered: 'I might as well tell you, though only Mr Barradas and myself are aware of the cause of his death. Two days ago he shot himself in a fit of depression. I had two doctors off at once to see him; but they both told me that he could not possibly live, and that even to move him ashore would hasten the end. Now, will you come below?'

With a curious but yet undefined feeling of dissatisfaction, Barry went below with the captain, who, taking off his cap, opened the door of one of the staterooms, and motioned to his chief-officer to follow.

Lying in the bunk of the stateroom, which was well lit up, was the figure of a man, who, when Rawlings lifted the sheet which covered his face—handsome even in death—appeared to Barry to have been about thirty years of age. Round the forehead and upper part of the head was a bandage. This Rawlings lifted and showed Barry a bullet-hole in the left temple; then, covering up the dead man's face again, he stepped out into the main cabin, and motioned Barry to a seat.

'Sit down, Mr Barry. You must listen to me for a few minutes, and I shall now quickly explain to you one or two things that may have appeared somewhat strange to you since you joined the ship. I have had a very great deal of trouble—trouble that my officers have shared with me. But I must tell you the story in detail, painful as it is for me to relate it. Indeed, neither Barradas, myself, nor the boatswain—the only three remaining out of the ship's original company—care to speak of it, for death and disaster have followed us throughout.

'When Tracey joined me in Honolulu as mate he was accompanied by his wife, a young Australian lady, to whom he was deeply attached. He was anxious to pay for her accommodation during the cruise; but to this I would not consent. I saw he was simply overjoyed at her being allowed to sail with him.

'I bought this vessel intending to run her among the Marshall and Caroline Islands in the usual trade; you know—coco-nut oil, turtle-shell, and sharks' fins. After leaving Honolulu we cruised among the eastward islands, and did well—so well that we nearly filled the ship. Then we stood away for the Carolines, and on our way ran into Port Lélé on Strong's Island to wood and water. It was after we left there that Tracey lost his wife. Poor girl! her end was a terrible one.' He sighed, and then resumed: 'A very terrible end—she was lost overboard. But let me tell the whole story.

'Whilst we were lying at anchor at Lélé we met an old trader there, with whom Tracey and myself frequently spent an evening. One night when we were talking together over various matters, the old man—who was very ill at the time—told us he had a secret to reveal if we made it worth his while. Knowing him as I had for many years as an honest old fellow, I listened with interest to what he had to say, and in a few minutes he had satisfied Tracey and myself that he knew of the existence of one of the richest pearling-grounds in the Pacific; and, provided he could find partners who would deal squarely with him, he would disclose the exact locality. His poverty had prevented him from



buying a vessel and returning to the island, which was only a week's sail from Lèle; but as the years went by, and his prospect of buying a vessel seemed as far off as ever, he determined to seek the aid of others. As a proof of his statements, he not only showed us a dozen or so of splendid pearl-shells, but also a score or two of magnificent pearls. Some of these he entrusted to me to sell for him in Sydney. I have, at his request, kept a few for myself. Let me show them to you.'

Going into his cabin, he presently returned with six or eight pearls, all of which were certainly splendid specimens. Placing them on the scarlet tablecloth, he pushed them over to Barry to examine.

'They certainly are beauties. I've seen larger and better in the Paumotu when I was in the *Tuvera*,' said Barry; 'but anyway that lot is worth four hundred or five hundred pounds.'

Rawlings nodded. 'Well, to cut a long story short, we came to an agreement with the old man, whereby I was to find divers, and provide all working expenses, boats, and the necessary gear; and I was to receive one-half of all the shell and pearls found. Tracey was to stand in with us too—old Gurden and myself were to each give him one-tenth.

'Taking the old man on board—the poor old fellow was not only in feeble health, but was childishly anxious, as he said, "to smell the smell of a big town again"—we left Strong's Island for Sydney. From the very first Gurney became weaker, and on the fourth or fifth day out he told us that he did not believe he would live through the night. We tried to cheer him up; but he only shook his head, and requested us to commit to paper the exact bearings of the patches of the pearl-shell beds in the lagoon he was doomed never to see again. This was done, and he then requested that, as Tracey's wife had nursed him during the time he was on board, what would have been his share of the profits of our coming venture should be given to her, as he had not a relative or connection in the world. Early in the morning he had breathed his last.

'We buried the old fellow that afternoon, and almost immediately afterwards dirty weather came up from the northward, and by nine o'clock we were driving along under an ugly sky at a great rate. Tracey was below, and I was on deck with Barradas, who had taken the wheel for a few minutes to allow the man who was steering to lend a hand at some job on the main-deck. Just then poor Alice Tracey came up from below, walked aft, and stood at the stern with her hand on the rail, looking at the brig's boiling wake; this was a frequent habit of hers. Neither of us took any further notice of her after she had remarked that the cabin was very stuffy—we were running before the wind at the time. About five minutes later I went forward; and, just as Bar-

radas was giving up the wheel again, he noticed that Mrs Tracey had disappeared. He gave the alarm in an instant, for he knew she had not gone below, and must have fallen overboard without a cry.

'In bringing-to, to lower a boat, our decks were twice filled, and this caused much delay. Poor Tracey nearly went mad, and both he and the boatswain searched for her all night in two boats, whilst we burnt every blue light on board, and then kept a flare going till daylight—all without avail. We were then about five miles west of Pleasant Island; and Tracey had a wild hope that his wife, who was a splendid swimmer, might have kept herself afloat and succeeded in reaching the land, which is densely populated. To please him, I sent the boats ashore, and made inquiries from the natives; but, of course, there was not the slightest hope—she must have hurt herself when she fell, and sunk at once, or else she could not have failed to have been seen or heard by one of the two boats.

'The rest of the voyage was sad enough in all conscience, for Tracey was never the same man again. The crew, too, began to get the idea that we were to be an unlucky ship, and eventually became gloomy, discontented, and finally almost mutinous. I dropped a good many of them at various islands as we came along, but picked up others in their places—just the sort of men I wanted for divers and boat-work. At Levuka I shipped six Penrhyn Islanders—the best divers in the Pacific; but the other fellows contaminated them, and they too bolted from me in Sydney. Poor Tracey took all our misfortunes very much to heart, for, in addition to his grief at the loss of his wife, he imagined that we should find ourselves forestalled when we reached Providence Lagoon. He had been very quiet and depressed for some days; but I never imagined that his mind would become unhinged. However, one night he locked himself in his cabin and shot himself.'

'Poor fellow!' said Barry, with genuine sympathy.

'I feel his loss most keenly, I can assure you,' resumed Rawlings, laying down his cigar, and sighing as he stroked his pointed beard. 'Well, all that could be done for him was done; but, as I have just said, the doctors gave no hope from the first. When he became conscious—which was early on the following day—and was told that he had no chance of life, he took it very quietly; but he begged me to let him remain on the ship and not to send him ashore. He had an absolute horror of dying in hospital, he said. Both of the doctors said it was just as well; so I yielded to his wishes. Then, besides being my chief-officer, he was a personal friend, and was largely interested with me in this pearl-shelling venture, though he had no share in the brig.'

Barry nodded. 'Hard lines.'

'Hard lines indeed. Now you will see how I was situated. Poor Tracey, urging me almost with his dying breath to put to sea, my solemn promise to him that I would do so the moment I could get men to replace those who had run away, and my own anxiety—all these things tended to irritate and upset me. To get men at the Government shipping-office meant a delay of perhaps three or four days; to obtain a suitable man as mate might have meant a week. During this time poor Tracey's death would have still further complicated matters, and hindered the *Mahina* from putting to sea. I had picked up those four loafing scoundrels you saw me bring aboard only an hour or two before I met you; and, just before I did meet you, I had decided to give Tracey's berth to Barradas, and promote the boatswain to second mate. However, I *did* meet you, and very glad I am of it, for I am sure we shall pull together.'

'I am sure of it,' answered Barry, who now felt a sympathy for the man.

'I must tell you,' added Rawlings presently, with a smile, 'that I'm not much of a navigator; and as Barradas is no better, I shall rely on you, as I did on Tracey.'

'Certainly, sir.'

After a few minutes more of conversation, in which Rawlings outlined his plans for the trading and pearling operations, and showed Barry a large-scale chart of Arrecifos Lagoon in the Caroline Islands, which was the brig's destination, the two men parted for the night.

Immediately after breakfast on the following morning the brig was laid to, the crew ranged upon the deck, and the body of her former chief-officer was carried up from the cabin by two native seamen and committed to the deep, Rawlings reading the service for the burial of the dead at sea.

## THE KING OF THE GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS.

By THOMAS LEANDER.



MOST of us have heard at school of the Galápagos Islands, for does not the equator pass through the group? Not one person in a thousand, however, renews his acquaintance even with the name, so perhaps it would be well to give a brief description of the archipelago.

The islands, which have an estimated area of over two thousand square miles, lie off the coast of Ecuador, the country to which they belong. They are distant about six hundred miles from the port of Guayaquil, whence a small schooner sails at irregular intervals for Chatham Island. The group is volcanic, and two active volcanoes have lately been observed, one in Albemarle and one in James Island. The climate is delightful, and it is almost impossible to realise that the equator is practically under one's feet.

In former times the islands were frequently visited by buccaneers for the purpose of careening their ships and giving their men a run ashore. More lately the South Sea whalers used the islands as a port of call; and some of their wells, dug out of solid rock, still remain at Tagus Cove in Albemarle Island.

The only island now inhabited is Chatham; but settlements have been made on others at various times, notably on Charles Island. As a result there are numerous wild cattle, sheep, pigs, goats, and horses, to say nothing of any number of donkeys. The latter are fine, up-standing animals, very quick and alert. Indeed, it is hard to believe that they are of the same race as the wretched creatures we see in England. Unfortunately the settlers were not content with import-

ing these, but added a few dogs, which have multiplied to an astounding extent, and have played havoc amongst the calves and porkers. Far worse, they have exterminated the gigantic tortoise, for which Galápagos was famous, and from which its name is derived—*galápagos* being the Spanish for tortoise. In 1897 we met an American scientific expedition that had been over nearly all the islands. They had, with very great labour and after long search, secured four or five specimens, and the party was unanimous in saying that these must be the last of their race. These tortoises were to be taken to San Francisco, sent by special train across to New York, and thence shipped to Tring Park for Lord Rothschild's museum there.

The waters of Galápagos abound in fish of many different kinds. Most of them give good sport on a stout sea-rod; but the numerous sharks cause the loss of much tackle. They are so voracious that when a fish is hooked the odds are that it will be bitten in two by a shark before it can be got into the boat.

In the lagoons and on any water that is found inland there are fair numbers of teal and plover. Many flamingoes are to be seen paddling in the shallows, and very pretty they are. Seals are plentiful, as are turtle. The rocky beaches are almost alive with crabs, and are also frequented by the huge, black, ugly iguanas. The sea iguana is black; his inland brother is always green. There are many small birds to be seen; the most striking is the cardinal-bird, so called from its extremely brilliant colour.

To come to the 'king of the islands' has taken a long time, so let me hurry on. We

anchored one day in 1898 at Wreck Bay, Chatham Island, and a desolate spot it looked. The only sign of life was a horse standing near a ramshackle hut on the beach. The island seemed to be made of lava boulders, and looked somewhat like a heap of coke. Before long, however, a clumsy boat was seen to be leaving the beach. Two men came on board; and, by mustering all our knowledge of Spanish, we made out that the owner of the place had invited us to go up to his *hacienda*. Three of us eagerly accepted the invitation.

On landing we found horses awaiting us at the hut, so we set off along a very rough road. Soon after leaving the beach the brush grew very thick, so that the trail was shut in by an almost impenetrable wall of vegetation. Many of the shrubs bore brilliant yellow or red flowers. After about five miles riding, all uphill, we came to the outskirts of the *hacienda*. The country here became entirely different. Large open fields surrounded us. The grass grew very luxuriantly. Farther on we could see rolling, grassy downs. It was like England, after our cruise along the sandy coasts of Chili and Peru. Soon we came to sugar plantations, and then emerged into the settlement itself. We rode up to a large building that bore in half-obliterated letters the ambitious name of El Progreso. Here we were welcomed by the 'king' of the island, Señor Manuel Cóbos.

Señor Cóbos is an Ecuadorian by birth. He speaks several languages, and has travelled extensively in Europe. We were taken up to the veranda, and at once provided with long glasses of a drink called *bull*, which proved very refreshing. From the veranda we overlooked the settlement, and could also see the sugar-mill and a large part of the plantations. There are about three hundred inhabitants. Practically all the men are convicts, and, judging from their faces, I should say every one is a potential murderer. There are a good many women and children. Some of the women are also convicts, and some have followed the fortunes of their lords and masters. They live in small thatched huts, about ten people to a hut on an average. All seemed happy and contented. After all it was not a bad life—plenty of food and a magnificent climate. Señor Cóbos told us that sickness is practically unknown. Order is maintained by a force of nine or ten policemen—a very small number when the character of the population is taken into account. The men are all provided with the indispensable machete, but of course they have no firearms, so that when one becomes outrageous he is quietly 'potted' by the police, secure in their possession of carbines.

Señor Cóbos proposed a ride round the estate, and we gladly assented; whereupon orders were given to saddle El Diablo and Phosphorus, and another animal with an equally terrifying name! As our horsemanship is far from good, we rather shivered. Luckily it turned out that the names

were the only fiery things about our steeds. We set out after Señor Cóbos, and were followed by a retainer bearing large vessels full of *bull*. At every gate or stoppage our Ganymede would gallop up, and we had to swig another glass.

Soon after leaving the settlement we began to climb the downs. The whole estate is enclosed in a huge ring-fence. Inside are cattle and horses in great numbers; outside are greater numbers of the wild cattle. Long lines of lime-trees, laden with yellow fruit, cut up the great fields. We rode to the top of a ridge, and halted to enjoy the view and the breeze. On one side lay the blue Pacific, stretching away to the unbroken horizon, with here and there patches of white where the long rollers broke in spouting surf against the rocks. On the other side green fields extended to the long lines of dark-green banana-trees and the waving fields of sugar-cane. The cool breeze that swept in from a thousand leagues of ocean was almost intoxicating in its freshness. However, as we had to be on board the ship by four, we had to jog on. We passed through long avenues of banana-trees, and through fields of sugar-cane, and finally got back to El Progreso. Time was too short to allow us to visit the coffee-plantation and the other parts of the estate. We were assured that Galápagos coffee is equal to any in the world, and certainly it would have been hard to beat the cup we had after lunch. Señor Cóbos gave us a very nice repast, with about a dozen varieties of vegetables, many fruits, some of which we had not seen before, and several kinds of chillies, one of the latter nearly taking the skin off my tongue.

After lunch we were given a fifty-pound bag of coffee, and bags of limes and oranges; indeed, we had to take away samples of nearly all the products of the island.

Señor Cóbos told us that he was going to be in Paris for the Exposition, and that he was taking over an exhibit from the Galápagos. At last we had very reluctantly to take leave of our genial host and jog back to Wreck Bay, where the ship was only awaiting our arrival to sail for Callao.

#### SUNSET FROM BOAR'S HILL, NEAR OXFORD.

MARVELLOUS vision! How the spangled sky

Pays its mute reverence to the setting sun,

Its evening worship when the day is done,

And all the golden clouds in order lie!

Such perfect silence and due symmetry

Reigns in the living West, and scarcely one

Of all who daily see the day's course run

Looks on the sacred service reverently.

And now the sun is set, and the pale night

Draws its gray curtain o'er the flickering West

That bids the sun adieu as to a guest

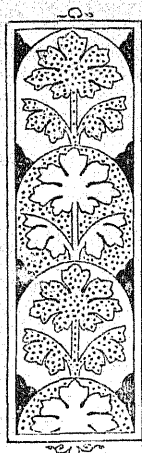
Watched till at length he passes out of sight;

Yet the dull workers of the earth work on,

For whom the sun through all the day has shone.

R. A. S. J.





# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### CRICKET CAPTAINCY.



REALLY good captain will first win the toss and then win the match ; but such captains, like good single-gut salmon-casts, are rare.

It may be interesting to begin this article with a subject hitherto untouched in the chronicles of cricket. I refer to the Bogy-man. He is to be found in every cricket circle ; but he is most frequently to be met with amongst the public school elevens—at Eton, Harrow, Fettes, or Loretto. It comes about in this way. One boy at Eton will remark to another, 'Have you heard of the new Harrow bowler? He can make a ball break both ways, and can send you down a shooter at any time he pleases.' That's the Bogy-man ; and the story spreads from public school to public school until this fortunate Harrow bowler is well upon the way to getting out the tail of the other public school elevens he may play against before they have put on their pads and come in to the wicket to take guard. Then there are many well-known cricketers I could name who keep a private Bogy-man of their own, as other men keep a private hansom-cab.

I remember a captain of Loretto School—he afterwards got into the Oxford eleven, and was for a time one of the most reliable batsmen playing for the county of Middlesex—who would tell you that he couldn't play some professional bowler, perhaps naming one in the Lancashire or Nottinghamshire eleven ; but when the match came off, and he had played a few overs from his Bogy-man, the bogy element vanished, and the scoring-board told a different tale.

Perhaps no man has ever bowled better for England than A. G. Steel. Playing against him once, I had upon my side his brother, D. Q. Steel. Winning the toss, we sent him in first ; and in the opening over he hit A. G. out of the ground for six, making in all some seventy runs, and we won the match. I think that six in the first over did it ; but, you see, brothers never will believe in the Bogy-man.

It may be that there is some bowler you fear. When you go in to bat make the best use of your height ; play without affectation, with patience, with a straight bat ; and this bowler you fear may after all prove to be only a Bogy-man.

It has fallen to my lot to captain many cricket elevens, sometimes playing forty matches in a single season ; and, recalling the memories of thirty years, I am impressed with one thing—that if you are to be successful as a captain you must rely upon yourself. No one in your eleven can tell you at the critical moment what to do, for the simple reason that no one has to follow the game with the same attention. No other has the responsibility. It is the responsibility that fixes your attention. I have sometimes captained an eleven with the year's captain of the Oxford or Cambridge University eleven upon my side. Here, you would say, was an excellent opportunity for what the doctors in Harley Street call a consultation ; you need not trouble yourself. Should you ask the captain of the light-blues or the dark-blues, it is not unlikely you will find he has been watching a drift of cloud, and thinking how it resembled the smoke from the cigarette he threw away when he left the pavilion.

You have to deal with two batsmen ; and from your mind there must never be absent the one thought how you are to get them out. They are like two men who have come up for an examination, and you wish to pluck them. You may pluck them upon papers they have been reading for months ; but your best chance will be to question them upon some subject unthought of by their coach. If they have been accustomed to fast and medium pace bowling, give them slow round-arm ; if to slow and medium pace bowling, give them fast bowling—the faster the better.

Perhaps you had the good fortune to be at Lord's cricket-ground upon the 12th of July last year, when D. L. A. Jephson bowled for the Gentlemen of England against the Players. From Jephson's first over it was evident that a paper had been discovered which the professional

players had neglected to read; and the under-hand bowler plucked them one after the other. His analysis cannot too often be written down: 18 overs, 7 maidens, 21 runs, 6 wickets. Now that he has been elected captain of the Surrey eleven, let us hope he may occasionally put himself on to bowl first; it will save time, taking the advice which Priscilla, the Puritan maiden of Plymouth, gave to John Alden—to 'speak for himself.'

If you are to have the captaincy of an eleven, the eleven should be chosen by yourself. If you are to captain Winchester, Rugby, Trinity College (Glenalmond), or Blair Lodge, it is by you that the eleven should be selected. Lancelot should choose his lance for the tournament, and no other. If you wish the best possible eleven for Surrey or Lancashire, leave the selection to the captain. I will go further, and say that if the eleven has to be chosen to play against the Australians, it will be best chosen by the man who is to captain the team. Naturally enough, you say to me, 'What about a committee?' There is a certain place that will be found to be paved with many things; one will be committees. I have had my share of them. I have been one of three chosen at a gathering of the cricket clans to choose elevens for certain matches. It works in this way: three men have been selected from the Surrey eleven; two men are brought forward from Lancashire, and as the Lancashire captain voted for the three Surrey men, one good turn deserves another, and the Surrey captain votes for the two Lancashire men. It may seem an exaggeration of the circumstance to put it in this way; but I fear that more or less it is the truth. If you wish anything mismanaged, put it into the hands of a committee. In the event of Lord Hawke, captain of Yorkshire, being elected to the captaincy of a team against the Australians, I would rather leave the selection of the team to him than to any committee in England. Trafalgar, Waterloo, the long series of victories in the Franco-Prussian war, were not the work of committees; these victories were in each case won by one man, unfettered, working upon his own responsibility.

When your team are practising batting, there should not be too many men bowling at one time; never more than three. The difficulty is to get men to play in practice as they play in a match. 'Play every ball you get in practice as you would play the first ball you receive in a match,' should be written up on the walls of the pavilion of every public school in England. If you are to have two bowlers, choose a fast and a slow. I once batted in practice through the whole of a cricket season to three fairly good professional bowlers—a fast, a slow, and a medium pace; the result of this was that in a match I had a difficulty in finding the ball with which to get out. I had to create the occasion for getting

out—an episode in our cricket career with which we are all only too familiar.

Encourage your men to practise bowling, especially those amongst them who are bad bowlers. Every man in an eleven should be able to bowl. I am not sure but that there is altogether too much attention paid to the good bowlers; in fact, I have known captains who never gave the bad ones a chance until the match was lost, when they would discover, too late, the error of their ways. When you have the captaincy of a team, try a bad bowler occasionally—just for an over; bad bowling sometimes produces wonderfully bad batting. The converse of the proposition is also true, that good bowling is apt to produce first-class batting. The great thing, after all, that we have to bear in mind is that we do not wish to 'set' the batsman; we wish to get him out. When I was taught to play whist I was told that if I was in doubt I was to play trumps; when you are in doubt choose your bowlers.

If you are a schoolmaster at a public school, and have the opportunity to teach boys to bowl, let them first learn to bowl a good length, then show them how to make a ball break from leg, and then how to make it break from the off. When you teach them this as you teach them Greek and mathematics we shall again see England beating Australia, and not the fiasco of last year, when we were told that England was waiting for bad wickets. I am glad to say that England waited in vain.

It is not difficult to get men to practise batting and bowling; the trouble is to get them to practise fielding. The headmaster of Loretto School always gave the preference to a boy for the eleven who was a good field. He used to say it was all very well for a boy to go in and make thirty runs; but if he dropped one or two catches, resulting in three times his score being made by some batsman upon the other side, it is to be doubted if he was a profitable venture for his side. Every member of an eleven should practise catching for a few minutes each day throughout the season. I remember a fielder at mid-off—of all places the easiest in which to hold a catch—dropping one that came to him medium pace and not too high. He informed me afterwards that it was the first catch of any sort he had had that season. I told him that the long-suffering Robespierre had sent many a man to the guillotine for less.

As captain you must have courage, like D'Artagnan or Hervé Riel (there was no fear in 'those frank eyes of Breton blue'). You must never know what it is to be beaten.

In cricket it is at times hard to say when we are beaten. Playing once at Partick against the West of Scotland, we won the toss; and, going in first, were all out for some sixty runs. To make matters worse, they succeeded in getting twenty runs without the loss of a wicket. Forty

runs to be got, and ten wickets to fall. One of their team, J. S. Carrick, held the record for the highest score in a single innings. We changed the bowling at each end, put on a slow round-arm bowler at one end and a fast underhand bowler at the other; and in little more than an hour they were all out, and we had won the match with a few runs to spare. The slow bowler was A. R. Don Wauchope, famous in the story of Rugby football; and the fast underhand bowler was Gordon Caldwell, the first winner of the Spencer Cup for Trinity College (Glenalmond).

Sometimes our courage is tested to the point that we have to call our philosophy to our aid. The Sheriff-Substitute of Dumfries and myself once distinguished ourselves in a match against the county of Peebles, and we were asked to play for them in the most important match of the season. It was a county match, so we could not refuse; but we proved a sad disappointment to the county of Peebles, as in four innings we failed to contribute a solitary run to their score. The good people of Peebles never asked us to play for them again. I trust that such a painful reminiscence may never be yours; but if by any chance it should, you must not be down-hearted. Next morning you will find that the omnibuses are running in Piccadilly all the same.

When your bowlers have pointed out to the fielders the positions in which they wish them to stand, you must be on your guard, and see that they keep in their places. Some men will move if they get the chance, especially if they have to field out a long innings played by a left-hand bat like F. G. J. Ford. The continual moving for the single run upsets them like a sea-voyage.

With regard to the order of going in, you will find it interesting to place a number opposite to the name of each member of your side, so to speak, as representing his value. In this way, your most reliable batsman will be represented by the number eleven, your second best by the number

ten, and so down to the last man, who will be distinguished by the unit. The most difficult bowling will come in the first hour or two, so send in your best batsmen to meet it. Do not send in first numbers eleven and seven; send in eleven and ten. Lord Roberts will tell you that ten battalions are better than seven. It frequently happens that in the last innings you have to get a certain number of runs in a limited time. Number six is a mighty hitter without much defence, and some one may suggest that you should send him in. It is a fine point; for my own part, I would rather send in eleven and ten, and tell them to force the pace.

I have many times been asked the question as to where to place a really bad fielder; the stereotyped answer is, 'Put him short-leg.' The unspeakable tragedies we have all witnessed at short-leg! There is a pathos about it all, for short-leg is always very sorry, and he has the sympathy of every one on the field. I write it down in sorrow; but it may be that the best thing to do with a really bad fielder is just to store him in the pavilion.

When you leave school or college start a cricket-club for yourself, and captain it to your heart's content. It need not be a very costly affair. The Vicar of Stratford-on-Avon and I once started a cricket-club; he had just left Christ Church, Oxford, and possessed a blue coat. Being frugal, we made the colours of the club blue, and so saved the cost of a coat.

What a game cricket is! How we love it, following it as the children in Hamelin followed the Pied Piper! Think of the friends it has given you. We could write down the names of captains of the public schools, of the universities, the names of men now in South Africa; but that may not be:

We that had loved him so, followed him, honoured him;  
Lived in his mild and magnificent eye;  
Learned his great language, caught his clear accents,  
Made him our pattern to live and to die.

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

CHAPTER V.—MDLLE. X.: HER HOME.



BETTER introduction to the village of Cour-des-Comptes no man could have had, and I had good reason to congratulate myself on the moment when Louis Vard came upon me in the dark road leading from the station.

'Is monsieur fond of fishing?' asked Vaurel, in his big bass voice.

'I'm a fisherman when I get the chance, M. Vaurel. Do you get good sport here?'

'You come down to me—anybody'll show you where I live—and I'll show you what we can

do, monsieur. If any one knows how to fish the Vilaine, it is I, Prudent Vaurel.'

'That's a bargain, then,' I said. 'I shall come to-morrow.'

'Good,' said he. 'We shall have rare times, you and I.'

Nothing could possibly have suited my plans better. Vaurel's offer had put into my hand the key of the country-side. Henceforth I was free to wander whithersoever I would without question, for the rod in my hand would frank me in advance to any would-be questioner.

My guests rose to depart in a body, all except



Vaurel and Louis Vard. Madame had already retired, and Jeanne's bright eyes were like sleepy stars. Then, with renewed injunctions to me to come down to his house in the morning, Vaurel went singing down the road, and I became aware of the fact that I was the no-company third to Louis and Jeanne. So, with hearty thanks to Louis for his kind offices during the evening, I begged Jeanne to show me to my room, and left Louis awaiting her return.

From certain indications I judged it was Jeanne's own room and bed in which I slept; but it was none the less comfortable on that account. It was a square, heavy-looking little room, by dim candle-light at all events, panelled to the ceiling in dark oak, and behind the heavy panels, richly carved in rough arabesques, were the beds, identical with the box-beds of my native land. The only furniture consisted of two great carved black oak chests and a small square looking-glass hanging on the wall.

Well satisfied with the day's work, I slept splendidly. I washed next morning in the back garden in a bucket of water drawn by Jeanne from the well, enjoyed a big bowl of excellent milk-coffee she had prepared for me, with the freshest of butter and the brownest of bread, and then asked her how I should find Vaurel's house by the river.

I would have liked to ask her many more questions concerning Mdlle. X., but deemed it best to go slowly in the matter and not give any indications of the real reason for my being there.

Jeanne herself, however, incidentally introduced the subject.

'Shall I put you to any inconvenience, Mademoiselle Jeanne, if I stay here a day or two?' I asked.

'No, monsieur; we shall be delighted, and there is no inconvenience whatever. You did the old ones good last night. It was a pleasure to see them so cheerful.'

'They are not generally cheerful, then?'

'*Mon dieu*, no!'—she shook her head—'not of late. You see, monsieur, the season has been a bad one, the crops were bad, and the cider was not good; and altogether things have not been bright in the country here. It may be better now that mademoiselle has come'—

She broke off short; but this was a subject I had no objection to her pursuing.

'Mademoiselle? Who is she?'

'Mademoiselle at the Château;' and then the pretty lips closed tight.

'Ah! She may make things better? How is that?'

'She is very charitable. She won't let the people go short if she knows it.'

'And she will be sure to hear of it?'

'Oh, she must hear of it. It is my aunt who is housekeeper at the Château, and my cousin Hortense who acts as mademoiselle's maid when she is here. She is a very pretty girl.'

'Who? Hortense or mademoiselle?'

'Oh monsieur! I meant Hortense. Mademoiselle is altogether lovely; but different, of course, from us others.'

'This seems a country of pretty girls, Jeanne,' I said; at which Jeanne's eyes laughed and her lips showed a gleam of white teeth. 'Well, I will go and find M. Vaurel, and see what sport he can offer me. I shall ask him to join me at dinner—shall we say at six o'clock? And if you see M. Louis, Jeanne'—and Jeanne's eyes twinkled as though she thought it by no means improbable—'you might beg him, with my compliments, to join us. I feel greatly indebted to him.'

'*Merci, monsieur*;' said Jeanne, and I went off down the road.

Through the village square, where I was an object of curiosity to the white-capped women—a packet of the best tobacco to be had at the tobacconist's, and it was not very good—then along a rough high-banked road which crept through the woods along the side of the hill, then a sudden turn and a rapid descent among the trees towards the noise of running waters and the monotonous thud, thud! thud, thud! of a waterwheel, and at last I was on the river-bank and found myself in front of a queer little rough-stone house, the door of which stood wide.

I knocked and called, 'M. Vaurel,' but got no answer; so I lit a cigar and sat down on the wooden bench to await the owner's return.

The water here flowed deep and smooth, and reflected as in a dark mirror the foliage of the steep wooded banks, which were, indeed, almost hillsides. About two hundred yards farther down, the smooth water fell over a weir, and at one side stood the mill, the soft monotonous thudding and buzzing of whose wheels detracted no more from the peacefulness of things than would the humming of a bee. After serving the mill, the broken water swept round in a wide curve, and the high wooded banks stood far back; and there, in the green strath between the hills and the river, stood a great house, undoubtedly the Château where Mdlle. X. was living. If the little stone house had been built for the purpose of keeping an eye on the Château, it could not have been better placed. I decided that M. Vaurel and I should be very good friends.

While I was still enjoying the prospect through the smoke of my cigar, a trumpet-like hail from across the water announced the arrival of friend Vaurel.

'*Holà, monsieur! Bon jour! bon jour!* We shall be across in a moment. *Allons, Boulot, mon petit!*'

He was in a flat-bottomed punt by this time, and came poling across the river; and, as the projecting nose of the punt ran up on to the shelving bank, a most formidable-looking bulldog, with the bandiest of legs, a massive head, and a repulsively-perfect face, scrambled hurriedly ashore, and came

running up to the house, without ever looking back towards his master.

'Come back, Boulot, beast! pig!—Have a care, monsieur; he is not good with strangers!' cried Vaurel.

But I was a dog-lover, and had no fear of him.

'Well, Bully, old man,' I said, 'come along and make friends;' and surely if he was not English-born his ancestors were, for the purposeful eyes blinked at the word and the stout little tail gave a friendly wag. He sniffed twice at me just by way of making a show of doing his duty, then the great front-paws came up on my knee and Bully's tremendous face was almost alongside mine, and he seemed to be wanting to say, 'Speak to me again in the tongue of my forebears. Your words stir something inside of me. Surely I too come of the British race.' Boulot and I were friends.

'*Tiens!*' said Vaurel as he came up the slope swinging a brace of wood-pigeons in his hand, and dimly perceiving something of all this, 'Boulot's English blood is stirred at sight of you. He frightens most people.'

'We are going to be very good friends,' I said. 'Who lives in the big house over there, M. Vaurel?'

'That is the family seat of the Des Comptes, monsieur; they own all the country round here.'

'Really. They must be wealthy. I should have thought rich people like that would live in Paris.'

'So they do mostly; but sometimes they come here.'

'Anybody there just now? Can one go over the house?'

I saw by his manner that he wished to avoid the answer I wanted, and this constant evasion of reference to Mademoiselle des Comptes puzzled me greatly, and only served to put a keener edge on my desire for information.

'The house is occupied just now,' he said at last; 'perhaps if monsieur stays long enough the opportunity may come.'

'Ah! the family is there perhaps—monsieur and madame?' I queried.

'Monsieur lies at Sedan. We were all through the war together. But the cursed Prussians killed him there, and did their best for me,' and he nodded at his empty sleeve. 'We were together; that is why I live here and have the freedom of the woods and waters over all the country-side.'

'I see,' I nodded, and again deemed it wise not to push him too hard at the moment. I was learning bit by bit, and it was no good trying to go too fast. 'It is a charming situation,' I said, 'and you ought to be happy here. How did you get the pigeons?'

'I shot them,' he said, handing me the birds and producing from his pocket a long-barrelled revolver. 'Because M. des Comptes was shot by those pigs of Prussians at Sedan I shoot his wood-

pigeons here, and hook his fish, and live in this house of his. Monsieur has not breakfasted yet?'

'No. I'm hoping to have one of those pigeons for breakfast,' I said.

'That's it, that's it, exactly,' he said; 'fresh trout from the river and plump wood-pigeons make a feast for a king.'

'And for dinner, I hope you will join me at Madame Thibaud's, M. Vaurel. I have asked Mademoiselle Jeanne to be ready for us at six.'

'Good!' said the burly one. 'Monsieur is a godsend in this quiet place.'

We got on admirably, Vaurel and I. He turned out a capital breakfast, and the brown bread and cider only threw into greater relief the excellent qualities of the trout and the wood-pigeons.

'Did you take Père Goliot the promised fish?' I asked while we were eating. 'I felt quite sorry for the poor old fellow. He looked as if he had had hard times.'

'Yes,' he said; 'he suffered more than most. His three boys went to the war, and none came back—not one. Yes, I took him his fish. We do what we can for him; but the season has been bad. Now, however, that mademoiselle'—

I listened with all my ears, though with no show of eagerness; but he broke off short and turned the subject.

After breakfast and a smoke we fished below the weir, and had a fair afternoon's sport. Boulot accompanied us with extreme reluctance, and sat afar off sniffing and snuffling disdainfully, with quick apprehensive glances at his master whenever by any chance he came anywhere near him; and it was only when at last we returned to the house and laid aside our rods, and with our string of trout turned up the path through the woods towards the village, that he showed any signs of the enjoyment of life and ran on briskly in front.

'Come back, pig, Prussian, old bandy-legs! Come back, and take care of the house!' shouted his master; but Master Boulot paddled resolutely forward with determination in his tail, and never even looked round at him. 'Very well, then; don't if you won't. I shall throw you in the water again some day;' and at that the brindled legs twinkled the faster, and Boulot disappeared round a turn of the road.

'He hates the water as the crows say the devil hates holy water. I threw him into the river for a wash one day, and he wouldn't speak to me for a week. He scares the children and the fools up above here, so I generally keep him away from them; but it shows what good friends we are that he consents to live so near the water. He heard you talk of dinner and doesn't want to miss the chance.'

'Has he ever bitten any of them?'

'Not he. He wouldn't bite them to save their lives; but they always think he looks as if he was just going to. He killed the sheep-dog at the Abbey Farm not long since, though—a big fierce

brute that was bad to the sheep; and since then the folks are more frightened of Boulot than ever.'

'Where did you get him?'

'It was at Wörth. He was very young then. He was sitting whimpering by his master's dead body, an Englishman who fought on our side, three days after the battle. He was starving, and I gave him all I had, and buried his master, and he has never left me since. He was at Sedan too, and stood between my legs when the Prussians closed in on us for the last time, on the hill

there. Heigh-ho! they were bad times those. *Mon dieu!* the things I saw that day. Now, monsieur, if you will go on to Mere Thibaud's and take her those'—handing me a small string of the trout—'I will leave these at the Château for mademoiselle. I must pay my respects to her.'

'I'll come with you,' I suggested ingenuously.

'No, pardon me, monsieur; it is necessary that I go alone.'

'All right. I'll go and hurry up Jeanne and the dinner.'

## OUR TOWN AND CITY GATES.

By SARAH WILSON.



ALTHOUGH all but a very few of the strong, high, wide stone walls that once surrounded and defended the most considerable of our old towns and cities have disappeared, there yet remain for us a great many of the gates with which they were provided for ingress or egress. Curiously, in the demolition of walls from time to time these gates have often been spared; and we may still admire their strength, resources, and picturesque appearance, though they are generally shorn of their original adjuncts of moats, drawbridges, portcullises, barbicans, and stone statues of defenders. In a few instances, on the other hand, as at Rochester and Exeter, they have been taken down and portions of the wall left standing; and in some places those that remain are threatened with removal, even now, on account of the obstruction to traffic they occasion; but for the most part they are looked upon, locally, as legacies from the past that should be carefully preserved.

A large city had as many as six or seven gateways, besides posterns; those of less consequence had four, or three, according, apparently, to their degree. It is curious to glance at their most frequent designations. They were, often, indicative of their situation with reference to the points of the compass—Eastgate, Westgate, Northgate, and Southgate being frequent names. The Highgate, the Lowgate, the Broadgate, the Narrowgate, the New, the Old, and the Shore gate were further familiar distinctions. Kingsgate is not unusual. Fishgate and Cowgate occur more than once. Bridgegate is another in general use where a bridge gave access to a town or city.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne was one of the cities that had seven chief gateways in its great encompassing wall. There are old maps extant showing their positions and giving their names; but they have disappeared as completely as the groups of equestrians and pedestrians, the strings of packhorses and the rumbling, massy-wheeled vehicles, that used to pass through them. Several lengths of the wall, however, are left in various parts of the ever-extending city, which are evidence that

it was more than twenty feet high in some parts, and eight feet thick.

The heads and quarters of traitors, it will be remembered, were exposed on city gates. On one of the Newcastle gates was exposed one quarter of the body of the brave and gallant Hotspur. His head was sent to the gateway on London Bridge, with one quarter of the body of Earl Bardoif, and his other quarters to York, Lincoln, and Berwick-on-Tweed. Lincoln was selected for the head of Earl Bardolf. The writs to the various authorities ordered the exposures to be made upon the gates in the manner which in like cases had been accustomed to be done. Four months afterwards fresh writs were issued, by the king's command, that the heads and quarters thus distributed should be delivered up for holy sepulture.

York has preserved its gates as well as its walls. There are four of them, called by their builders and defenders Mickelgate Bar, Bootham Bar, Monk Bar, and Walmgate Bar. Mickelgate was the one chosen for the exposure of the remains of those who had suffered for treason down to the execution of the vanquished at Culloden. Until 1827 it retained its barbican. The barbican doors leading out on to the top of the walls still remain. The stone figures on the topmost parapets have been also permitted to stand, and the arms of France as well as those of England are still displayed. Bootham Bar has likewise lost its barbican, but still possesses its portcullis, and its stone figures have been renewed. Monk Bar continues to display the arms of France as well as those of England; and, though it has lost its barbican, it still possesses its stone statues of defenders and its portcullis. Walmgate has been less tampered with than the rest on its outer side; for it has its barbican, embattlements, portcullis, and strong gates. Its inner side, however, was so far modernised in the last century as to have a new two-storied front thrown out from it made of timber and plaster, not resting on the ground, but supported at the necessary height over the archway by two strong stone columns.



Berwick-on-Tweed had likewise four gates; but only three remain—Scotchgate, Shoregate, and Cowgate. The fourth, now lost, was Bridgegate. Shoregate and Cowgate still possess their ancient wooden gates, with their massive bolts and hinges.

London had seven double gates in medieval times. Topographers going over the ground in the last century mention fifteen, in which number they probably included posterns. They have been taken down, but there are many particulars about them in the writings of early antiquaries. A twelfth-century authority, William FitzStephen, tells us there were many turrets on the wall round the city, which on the south side had been cast down and washed away by the Thames in his day. As at Lincoln, the first wall and gates were made by the Romans. They built the wall about nine feet thick, with Roman bricks or tiles; and they made four gates—Aldgate, Aldersgate, Ludgate, and Bridgegate. In the last century, notwithstanding the Great Fire and the ceaseless stream of improvements, there were various fragments of the medieval wall standing. At the end of Gravel Lane, for instance, one of the towers remained, though much decayed. Still earlier, in Pepys's time, we come across frequent mention of it. In an entry in his *Diary* recording the breaking down of his coach, which was mended by a smith for six shillings, he set down, 'Away round by the wall and Cowgate, for fear it should break again.' The poet Chaucer lived in one of the city gates, and his agreement with the Lord Mayor and Corporation is still among the municipal possessions.

Chester, also a Roman city originally, and where the medieval walls are carefully maintained, had likewise four gates—East, West, South, and New gates. Dr Johnson mentioned in his account of Shrewsbury, when he visited that town on his way to Wales, that the walls there were broken and narrower than those of Chester. In 1731 three gates were standing in Coventry—Portgate, Chilmersgate, and Newgate. A view of the town at that date shows a length of the wall extending from one to the other of them. In an engraving dated 1822 we may see one of the Exeter gates was then standing. It was richly wrought with carved work on the arch over the passage-way, and on the second story there were two cusped windows with elaborate mouldings, one on either side of a central niche, in which was a sculptured figure. The upper story had been somewhat modernised with diamond-paned lattices, but the whole was a faithful record of the stalwart men who defended and guarded it. A low doorway gave access to a narrow spiral stair, by which they ascended to the upper stories. Concerning another of the old gates in Exeter—Southgate—there has been handed down word of a tragic incident of the days of Edward I. A certain precentor, Walter Lichdale, was murdered; and on the particular night of the commission of this crime the Southgate was left open, and the murderer or murderers passed out of

it and got away. For this negligence, the Mayor, Alfred Duport, and the porter were hanged.

Sandwich has preserved only one of its most ancient gates—Fishersgate; but it has another of quaintest aspect, which has low flint-chequered towers with conical roofs of Tudor workmanship, called the Barbican, though it is not one in the usual acceptance of the word. This town was once the great point of departure for the Continent. Kings and nobles, with their armies and followers, set out from it and returned to it. Richard Cœur de Lion walked barefoot from it to Canterbury in gratitude for his deliverance from foreign durance and safe home-coming. Thomas à Beckett landed there after his last, long absence in France on the occasion of his final quarrel with his royal master, and remained in the neighbourhood for some days before he went on to his death at Canterbury. And the great stalwart gateway still stands that looked down upon all the coming and going. It is built of flint and stone, having two upper stories, with a large mullioned and transomed window in each, besides another in the apex of the gable, lighted by a smaller opening, and is a worthy entrance to the medieval cinque port. The entrancing features of the dreamy town, its hoary churches, ancient houses made of timber framework with projecting stories and gables, its narrow streets, old gardens, open water-way called the Delf, and bulwarks kept pleasantly green and neat for a promenade, seem of one accord with it. The towers usually placed on either side of the central archways were not considered necessary in this case, and the general aspect is less military in consequence, though there are arrow-slits on each side of the largest window, now filled up.

There were six gates opening out of the wall round Canterbury. Only one of them—Westgate—is preserved. It has two tall round-towers, one on either side of the archway, and between them, high up above the second story, is corbelled out a strong parapet, from which, we may be sure, its defenders in old times would have met with very prompt measures any hostile attempt to approach the gate. It carries us back to the old days, when other men besides Richard Cœur de Lion walked barefoot into Canterbury with great emotion, perhaps in penance, perhaps with thanksgiving; and when thousands of pilgrims flocked to the city who must have looked up at its gray massiveness and commanding aspect with the same admiration as our own. As well as sun-dried and windworn-gabled houses and mellow-tinted old churches, there is the grand cathedral close by, radiant with its tiers of canopied niches, sculptured figures, tapering finials, glancing lights upon its traceried windows and upon the noble altitude of its towers, and with all the pathos of the Black Prince's tomb sealed in it, and all the unravelled mysteries of its legends and history; and yet this fine old gateway holds its own with dignity.

Winchelsea has preserved three old gateways—Pipewellgate, Newgate, and Strandgate. They command the principal approaches to the ancient town, in which there are many other antique features that give it an indescribable charm. A gateway in another of the Cinque Ports—Rye—has round-towers on either hand, of the same massive, reticent character as those that defend the Westgate at Canterbury, as well as a similar corbelling of the parapet overhanging the passageway; and though houses and shops are now built up close to it, there is an expression of inert resistance to French invasion, which, together with the drift of the historical incidents of French burnings and other indications of more recent date, gives the place a character of its own.

In several instances, when no longer required for the safety of the town, these old gateways were used as prisons. Canterbury thus utilised its west gate. Alnwick used one for this purpose (deserters were confined in it in 1755) and another for a poorhouse, and meetings of some of the trade guilds were held in it late in the last century.

Alnwick was the only town that was walled between Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Berwick-on-Tweed, and it was not furnished with this protection till the fifteenth century was well advanced. Among the Corporation records are documents which inform us that Henry the Sixth, in consideration of the burning of the town by the Scots, and its dangerously open situation, gave the Earl of Northumberland and the burgesses of Alnwick leave to enclose it with a wall with embattlements and machicolations. The work was commenced forthwith, but not much progress had been made when the Scots appeared on the scene again and burnt the town once more. A petition was next sent up to the king praying that, by way of plentiful alms, he would remit the fees for the ensembling of the license. A second charter, signed at Bamborough in the forty-second year of his reign, sets forth that, as his humble and faithful lieges had been robbed and spoiled of all their movable goods, and their houses and mansions burnt, he would grant them various privileges, duly enumerated, towards the making of a port at Alnmouth, the establishment of a market, two annual fairs, the building of the town wall, and the reparation of the parish church. Another document details how two men were commissioned, in the next reign, to solicit alms for the completion of the town wall 'against the Scots,' on account of the loss of Berwick-on-Tweed, which had left the country greatly impoverished and weakened. At last the wall was completed, about a mile in circumference, twenty feet high, and six feet wide, with four massive gateways opening through it—Bondgate, Pottergate, Narrowgate, and Clayport. The two latter have been taken down; Pottergate was rebuilt, ornately, in the last century; but Bondgate still stands unimpaired, except for the touches time and weather give to all

things. It is built with huge hewn stones, and composed of two three-storied, semi-octagonal towers, having a central archway between them, of a width calculated to admit two horsemen abreast. The window-openings of the towers facing the country are only a few inches across, and the sole ornamentation is a panel over the archway carved with the Brabant lion, a badge of the second Earl Percy. The machicolations are above this panel, and are not continued on the towers. Nor is there any trace of a barbican. On the sides of the towers we can still see where the walls commenced. The window-openings on the side looking into the town are large and mullioned.

Antiquaries have ascertained that in many instances before the stone walls were built, in medieval times, there were earthworks and ditches that were but developments of those the ancient Britons made round their clusters of hut-circles. These not proving sufficient, royal licenses were obtained for the erection of stone walls, such as the Romans had built in so many places, and tolls were granted to defray the expense. Close within these walls ran a narrow lane or street, from which access was easy. On the outer side was often a ditch or moat. On the top was a path wide enough for two persons to walk side by side, protected by an embrasured parapet. At intervals were towers; between the towers were smaller turrets; and facing the great roads of approach were the gateways, which had passageways sufficiently wide and high for two armed horsemen to ride through abreast, and which were generally defended by a tower on either side of them, sometimes round, as at Canterbury, and occasionally of a semi-octagonal form, as at Alnwick. Oxford is an example that affords much gratification. It is stated in Domesday Book that there were twenty mural mansions there exempt from house-tax, because they were charged with the repair of the city walls. As there are no traces of such early walling, it is concluded they must have been palisades and earthworks. It was Henry III. who granted the necessary license for the building of the stone wall. This, antiquaries make sure, was of an irregular loop-like form, and joined the castle wall, for there are sufficient remains of it to trace its course. On the top was the usual walk. Close within was the narrow lane for access; and close without on the north side was a ditch, to continue the defence afforded by rivers at other portions. The towers are thought likely to have contained the indispensable stairs, as there are no remains of steps elsewhere. There were four gates—Northgate, Southgate, Eastgate, and Westgate. In the lifetime of William of Wykeham a bargain was made with the city authorities to keep a certain length of the wall in repair on condition that the narrow lane close within it might be thrown into the grounds of his New College; and this agreement has been so faithfully

kept that we may still view the battlements and towers in good condition along the space in question. An antiquary of Stuart times speaks of the Northgate as giving delight to strangers on account of its strength and beauty, and mentions

that it was used as a prison not only for debtors and malefactors, but for scholars 'for little faults.' Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer were detained in it previous to their martyrdom. Only the sites remain of this and the other Oxford gates.

## ARRECIFOS.

### CHAPTER IV.—IN ARRECIFOS LAGOON.



HE *Mahina* had rounded the south-eastern end of New Caledonia ten days after leaving Sydney, and was steering a northerly course between the New Hebrides group and the great archipelago of the Solomon Islands for Arrecifos Lagoon. During these ten days Barry had had time to study Captain Rawlings and the rest of the ship's company, and had come to the conclusion that there was some mystery attached to both ship and crew. The latter, with the exception of the boatswain, who was a dark-faced, ear-ringed Greek, and the four new white hands brought on board by the captain, were all natives of various islands of the Equatorial Pacific. Seven of the twelve—with two of the white men—were in Barry's watch; Barradas had the rest.

Among Barry's men was a stalwart young native, much lighter in colour than the others, very quiet in his demeanour, but willing and cheerful. His name—so he told Barry—was Velo, and he was a native of Manono, in the Samoan group. For the past four or five years he had been wandering to and fro among the islands of the Pacific, his last voyage being made in a luckless Hobart Town whaleship, which he had left at Sydney in disgust and without a penny in his pocket. Like Barry, he had been attracted to the *Mahina* by the fact of her being engaged in the island trade, and, indeed, had only joined her two days before Barry himself. His cheerful, ingenuous manner, combined with his smart seamanship, made the chief officer take a great liking to him; and even Barradas, gruff and surly, and ever ready to deal out a blow, admitted that Velo was, next to the boatswain, the best sailor-man of all the crew.

On the second day out the strong westerly breeze had failed, and was succeeded by light and variable airs, much to Rawlings's anger. Walking the poop one day with Barry, he gave vent to such a sudden outburst of rage and blasphemy at the little progress made by the brig that the chief-officer gazed at him in astonishment. However, on the morning of the fourth day a steady breeze set in, and Rawlings's equanimity was restored. His anxiety to make a quick passage was very evident; yet when the vicinity of the northern Solomons was reached, and continuous and furious squalls were ex-

perienced almost every night, he would refuse to take in sail till the very last moment, although Barry respectfully pointed out the risk of going on under such circumstances; for, besides the danger to the spars, the islands of the Solomon group were but badly charted, and the currents continually changing in their set; but to these remonstrances he turned an impatient ear.

'We must push her along through the Solomons,' he said one dark night to Barry, as the *Mahina* was tearing through the water under the hum of a heavy squall, quivering in every timber, and deluging her decks with clouds of spray, which, from there being a head-sea, leapt up from her weather-bow as high as the foretopsail. 'I want to get into Arrecifos Lagoon as quickly as I can, even if we do lose a light spar or two. I'm no navigator, as you know; but I know the Solomons as well as any man, for I've been trading and nigger-catching there for six years at a stretch—a long time ago; and out here, where we are, we're safe—there's a clear run of six hundred miles, free of any danger. So the old skipper of the *Black Dog* used to tell me, and he knew these parts like a book.'

Presently, as he leant back on his elbows against the weather-rail, he added in an indifferent tone of voice: 'At the same time, I believe there is no cause for hurry; but perhaps Tracey has imbued me with some of his fears that some one else might get there before us, and either get the pick of the shell or perhaps skin the whole lagoon out altogether.'

Northward from the lofty verdure-clad Solomons the brig sped steadily onward, leaving behind her the fierce sweeping rain-squalls and the swirling currents and mighty ocean tide-rips, whose lines of bubbling foam, seen far away, often caused even the native lookouts to call out 'Breakers ahead!' and then she sailed into the region of the gentle, north-east trade-wind, till the blue mountain-peaks of Ponapé the Beautiful showed themselves upon the sunlit sea far to leeward.

Just after midnight, three days later, Velo, the Samoan, who was on the lookout, came aft to Barry and said, '*E manogi mai le fanua*' ['The smell of the land has come'].

'Good boy, Velo,' replied the mate; 'keep a



sharp lookout, for on such a night as this, when the sea is smooth and the land lies low, we shall not hear the sound of the surf till we are right on top of it.'

An hour or two later Barry called Rawlings, for right ahead of the brig there was a low, dark streak showing upon the sea-rim, which they knew was the outline of one of the palm-clad islets on the south side of Arrecifos Lagoon. At daylight the *Mahina* ran through the south-east passage, and dropped her anchor in thirteen fathoms, close to the snowy-white beach of a palm-clad islet, on which was a village of ten or a dozen native houses. There was, however, no sign of life visible—not even a canoe was to be seen.

Immediately after breakfast the boats were lowered, and a brief inspection was made, not only of some of the nearest of the chain of thirteen islands which enclosed the spacious lagoon, but of the lagoon itself. The islands were densely covered with coco-palms, interspersed here and there with lofty puka-trees, the nesting-places of countless thousands of a small species of sooty-petrel, whose discordant notes filled the air with their clamour as Rawlings and Barry passed beneath, walking along a disused native path, while the two boats pulled along the shore. The village was found to be abandoned.

After examining the nearest islands and deciding where to build a station, the two white men returned to the boats, which then pulled out towards the centre of the lagoon. Half a mile due west from the centre of the south-east islet the deep-blue water began to lighten in colour, till it became a pale green, and the coral bottom lay clearly revealed at a depth of five fathoms.

'This is one of the patches mentioned by Gurden,' said Barry, after carefully taking bearings and studying a rough plan of the lagoon, which had been given him by Rawlings; 'let us try here first. Billy Onotoa, and you, Tom Arorai, go down and see.'

Two of the crew—short, square-built natives of the Line Islands—let go their oars, picked up their diving-sticks, and were over the side in an instant; but even before they were half-way down, the other natives in the boat, who were intently scanning the bottom, cried out that they could see 'plenty pearl-shell.' The truth of their assertions was soon proved by the two divers returning to the surface, each carrying two pairs of splendid shells as large as dinner-plates.

Rawlings's dark eyes sparkled. 'What do you think of that, Mr Barry?'

'If the rest of the patches in the lagoon have shell like that there is a huge fortune in it. Shell such as that is worth two hundred and fifty pounds a ton—a fortune indeed, even if not a single pearl is found.'

Rawlings breathed excitedly. 'But there are plenty—plenty. We can be certain of that. Let

us go back to the ship as quickly as possible, and get ready to start to work;' and, seizing the steer oar, he bade the men give way, not with an encouraging word, but a savage oath.

Barry looked at him in astonishment and disgust combined. The man's usual smiling, self-complacent manner had disappeared, and he now seemed a prey to emotion, his face alternately paling and flushing with excitement, and Barry saw that his whole frame was trembling. By the time the boats came alongside the brig, however, he was restored to his usual self.

Barradas and Paul, the truculent-looking Greek boatswain, were both on the main-deck as Rawlings ascended.

'Well?' said Barradas inquiringly.

'It's all right,' answered Rawlings in a low voice, as if he feared to speak aloud; 'we shall be well repaid for all'—

'Sh!' said the Greek warningly, as Barry's head appeared above the rail, and both he and the second mate turned away and busied themselves with their duties.

Telling the steward to see that the hands had dinner a little earlier than usual, Rawlings called Barry, the second mate, and the boatswain below, to discuss their future operations. In the hold were the two large boats which had been bought in Sydney, with pumping-gear and diving-suits, and it was decided to at once hoist the former out; though, as the water appeared to be so shallow, it was not thought likely the latter would be used, the natives asserting that they could get more shell by diving in their own fashion. Barry, from his previous experience of pearl-shelling in the Paumotu, was to have practically the entire control of the natives and charge of the boats, and the choice of a permanent anchorage was also to be left to him, and also the selection of a site for the shore-station, where houses were to be built by the native crew, so that they might live on shore when bad weather prevented them from diving. A quarter of a mile from where the brig lay anchored was a sandbank, covered with a low, dense scrub about three feet high; the beach was the haunt and laying-place of huge green turtles, and the scrub the nesting-ground of countless myriads of sea-birds. The spot at once suggested itself to Barry as a suitable place for 'rotting out'—that is, allowing the pearl-oysters to be exposed to the sun till they opened and could be cleaned. Here Rawlings, Barradas, or the Greek could receive the shell from the boats, spread it out to 'rot,' search for the pearls within, and then send it to the ship to be further cleaned, weighed, and packed in boxes, timber for making which had been brought from Sydney for the purpose.

But Barry, being of the opinion that a better anchorage could be found off the largest island on the western side, which was also well timbered, and would be best suitable for a shore-station, suggested that he should examine the place.

'It is twenty miles away, and will take you two days,' said Rawlings. 'Why cannot we stay where we are? Besides that, the big island is inhabited—so Gurden said—and the natives are a lot of savages. Why can't we make our station here on the south-east islet?'

'For several reasons, sir,' replied Barry. 'In the first place, we shall have to study our native divers. They will not be satisfied to live on this little islet here just ahead of us; for, although there are plenty of coco-nut trees on it, it is little better than a sandbank, and when bad weather comes on they will get dissatisfied and sulky, and when they become sulky they won't dive. Now, that big island—so Gurden told you—is much higher than any of the rest; it has not only plenty of coco-nuts, but groves of breadfruit as well, and there are several native wells there. If we remain here I am afraid that our men will be continually grumbling. Every now and then some of them will be running away; a breadfruit grove and plenty of fresh water would be attractions no Kanaka ever born could resist.'

'Very well, Mr Barry. Whatever you suggest I will do; only let us get to work quickly.'

'I think, sir, that after dinner I had better take one of the whale-boats, with four or five hands and two days' provisions, run down to the big island, and see what it is like.'

All these matters being arranged, Rawlings invited his officers to drink success to the future.

After dinner Barry picked five men to accompany him. Each man took with him a Snider rifle and a dozen cartridges in case of their being attacked by the natives. At two o'clock they left the ship, hoisted the sail, and stood away for the island, which was just visible from the deck.

Soon after Barry had left, Captain Rawlings entered the main cabin with Barradas, and told the steward to send the boatswain down.

For nearly half-an-hour they spoke together, now in low, now in excited and angry voices; and Mr Edward Barry would have been deeply interested in their conversation could he have but heard it, inasmuch as he was the chief subject.

'I tell you,' said Rawlings in a cold, sneering tone, as he leant over the table with his chin resting on his hands, and looking at Barradas—'I tell you that it will have to be done before we can take this ship into port again.'

'Mother of God!' said Barradas passionately, 'he is a good fellow, and I won't do it. No more such bloody work for me, Rawlings.'

Rawlings picked up his half-smoked cigar from the table, and puffed at it in silence for a few seconds; then he laid it down again, and his black eyes gleamed with suppressed fury as he looked at the Spaniard. But he spoke calmly.

'And I tell you again that no one of us will ever be safe. If he lives, something will come out some day; it always does, my brave and tender-hearted Manuel. You and I have been

lucky so far in smaller matters; but this is a big thing, and we have to look to ourselves.'

'Yes,' said the Greek, with savage emphasis. 'Mus' we all t'ree be hung like dogga because you, Manuel, hava no pluck? Bah, you coward!'

'Don't you call me a coward, you dirty, ear-ringed Levantine thief!' and Barradas sprang to his feet. 'Take it back, you mongrel-bred swine, or I'll ram my fist down your greasy throat!'

'You cursed fools!' said Rawlings, with a mocking laugh, as he pushed Barradas back into his seat, and then turned furiously upon the Greek. 'What do you mean by insulting Manuel like that? You must take it back;' and, unperceived by the Spaniard, he gave the man a deep, meaning glance.

The Greek, who had drawn his sheath-knife, dashed it down upon the cabin floor, and extended his hand to the second mate.

'I take it back, Barradas. You are no coward; you are brave man. We are all good comrade. I never mean to insult you.'

Barradas took his hand sullenly. 'Well, there you are, Paul. But I say again, I want no more of this bloody work;' and, looking first at Rawlings and then at the Greek, his dark, lowering face quivered. 'Come, let us understand each other. I swear to you both, by the Holy Virgin, that I will be true to you; but this man Barry must not be hurt. Sometimes, in the night, I see the face of that girl, and I see the face of Tracey, and I see and feel myself in hell'—

Rawlings's foot pressed that of the Greek.

'There, that will do, Manuel; let us say no more about it. I yield to you. We must take our chances.'

Barradas sighed with relief, and held out his hand to Rawlings.

'You won't play me false?' he inquired.

'I swear it,' said Rawlings, again pressing the Greek's foot, and then standing up and grasping his officer's hand.

'And I too,' said the Greek, extending his own dirty, ring-covered paw. 'As you say, he is a good man, and perhaps he can do us no harm. And we must all be good comrade—eh?'

And then, after drinking together in amity, the three separated.

Whilst Barradas was forward and Rawlings was pacing the poop, the ear-ringed Greek came along with some of the hands to spread the after-awning. As the seamen carried the heavy canvas up the starboard poop-ladder, the Greek walked up near to Captain Rawlings, who was on the port side, and said quickly, as he pretended to busy himself with the port-boat falls:

'Both of them will hava to go—eh?'

'Yes,' answered Rawlings savagely; 'both of them. But Barradas must go first. We shall want the other to take us to Singapore. If I could navigate we could get rid of them both before we leave here.'

## THE MANUFACTURE OF ALCOHOL FROM PAPER AND SAWDUST.

By C. AINSWORTH MITCHELL, B.A., F.I.C.



ALTHOUGH attempts have been made from time to time during the last half-century to utilise wood-fibre of various kinds in the manufacture of alcohol, it has been reserved for Dr Simonsen of Christiania to work out a satisfactory process, and to prove experimentally that it can be carried out on a manufacturing scale.

Paper consists almost entirely of cellulose, which is also a principal constituent of wood-fibre and the basis of all vegetable cell-membranes. It is most widely known in its practically pure form of cotton-wool. Chemically it is closely allied to starch; and the problem which has recently been solved has been its partial conversion into sugars capable of being fermented by yeast.

In all methods of manufacturing ordinary spirit, the first stage consists in preparing a solution of such fermentable sugars; the second, in subjecting this to a process of fermentation under such conditions as to obtain as large a yield of alcohol as possible; and the third, in distilling the spirit from this alcoholic 'wash.'

Fermentable sugar occurs ready-formed in nature in fruits and in many plants and vegetables, notably the sugar-cane and beetroot; and in some distilleries the 'wort' is partially prepared from such sugar. In this country, however, the principal source of alcohol is the starch contained in malted or unmalted barley or other grain.

During the process of malting, which may be briefly described as a limited germination or sprouting, an active principle or enzyme, known as diastase, is developed within the germ of the barley. This enzyme possesses the power of acting, in the presence of water and at a suitable temperature, upon the starch in other parts of the seed or in other unmalted grain. Thus all that is necessary to obtain a solution of sugar from grain is to make a 'mash' of crushed malt, or of a mixture of malt and any cereal, with water, to maintain the liquid at a suitable temperature until the starch has been converted, and to drain off the extract, which will now be fit for fermentation.

In addition to utilising the action of diastase, it is possible to convert starch into sugar by treating it with water containing hydrochloric or sulphuric acid in a closed vessel at a high temperature. The resulting product is treated with lime to neutralise the acid, which has now effected its end, and the solution of sugar drained off and fermented. This process, technically known as 'acid inversion,' is in general use, often in conjunction with the malt conversion process.

Taking into account the close relationship between starch and cellulose, Simonsen's preliminary experiments were made with the object of determining to what extent it was possible to invert the latter in a similar manner. By varying the conditions he found that by treating cellulose (paper) in a closed vessel with water containing a very small proportion of sulphuric acid, good results were obtained at a pressure of about eight atmospheres. Under these conditions the yield of sugar was about 45 per cent., and a considerable proportion of the sugar could be fermented. The crude spirit had a characteristic smell of a somewhat tarry character.

Sawdust contains, besides cellulose, an allied substance known as lignin, which offers much more resistance than cellulose to the action of reagents; and it would seem from the results of Simonsen's experiments that only the cellulose contributed to the formation of alcohol in this case. The maximum yield of sugar obtained from sawdust was only about 20 per cent.; but, on the other hand, the inversion required only about fifteen minutes, or one-sixth of the time required by paper. Under no conditions was it found possible to ferment more than about 64 per cent. of the sugar obtained, the residue consisting of non-fermentable compounds.

Experiments which were then made on a manufacturing scale were equally successful in establishing the necessary factors for the inversion of sawdust in a large steam-pressure boiler. It was found that the amount of moisture in the sawdust was immaterial, provided it was taken into account in calculating the relative proportions of wood and water, which were preferably as 4 to 1. The most satisfactory results were obtained when the quantity of acid in the water was about one-half per cent., any considerable deviation from this amount causing a falling off in the yield of sugar.

Pine sawdust produced a larger amount of sugar and a purer alcohol than fir sawdust. As in the experiments in the laboratory, the yield of sugar usually amounted to about 22 per cent.; but in one experiment, in which birch sawdust was employed, it was as high as 31 per cent., calculated on the substance taken. The amount of sugar obtained from cellulose was 45 per cent., and a yield of 22 per cent. from sawdust corresponded to 45 per cent., calculated on the amount of cellulose contained in the wood.

In the third stage in the manufacture of spirit, the fermented 'wash,' which usually contains about 6 per cent. of alcohol, is subjected to a process of distillation, generally in what is known as a



column still. As alcohol has a lower boiling-point than water, the portion which first distils consists of a mixture of alcohol and water, in which the proportion of the former is much higher than in the original 'wash,' whilst the succeeding fractions contain less and less alcohol. By again distilling the first fraction a still stronger spirit is obtained; and by repeated distillation of those portions which pass over first, absolute alcohol can finally be reached.

In Simonsen's experiments on a large scale with sawdust, about 75 per cent. of the total sugar produced could be fermented, and the 'wash' contained between 1 and 2 per cent. of alcohol. This alcohol, when separated by fractional distillation from the accompanying water and other sub-

stances, was found to have an excellent flavour, and to be remarkably free from the usual impurities of commercial spirit.

In the best experiments 225 lb. of sawdust, containing about 20 per cent. of moisture, yielded about one and a third of a gallon of absolute alcohol. The sawdust used was invariably in a fresh condition, and the amount of alcohol capable of being obtained from decomposing sawdust has not yet been determined.

If, as seems highly probable, this ingenious method of utilising what is almost a waste product is generally adopted, the well-known sign of 'Wines from the wood' seems liable to be superseded by the more literal one of 'Spirits from the wood.'

## 'THE WHITE PIGEON'

### A DREAM OF SOUTH AFRICA.

By LAURA F. WINTLE.



HE General knew nothing about it—certainly not; he would have fainted if he had.

Jake is fifteen; I am seventeen.

We live in the town with father; but father had gone off about some business across the border before the troops came, and I suppose he could not get back to us. At any rate he didn't, so Jake and I were alone.

Father had left us some money—'Plenty and to spare,' he called it. As days went on in siege-time we did not find it likely to be plenty; assuredly there would be none to spare.

Jake is lame. I can climb like a cat, and can ride anything that goes on four legs. When the siege began Jake was always lamenting because he was lame and could not volunteer as a soldier for the Queen.

'It is no use to lament,' I said; 'and, after all, you eat less than a strong man, and that is helping things considerably at this pinch.'

One day Jake came in and said the General was offering twenty pounds for a message to be taken through the Boer lines. No black runner would take it, as several had been caught and shot.

'Jake,' I said, 'I'll take that message.'

'Right you are,' he replied. 'I wish I'd your chance of such a lark; but, Marjory Daw, my dear, they'll never trust it to a girl.'

'I don't suppose they will,' I said; and I sat down quite disappointed.

Just then Mrs Perkins from next door came in.

'Jake,' she said—she thinks Jake is a saint because he's lame—'Jake, my dear, it is a pleasure to see your gentle face.—I'm thankful to see you sitting quiet, Marjory. I hope these awful times have taught you to consider your latter end, and to give up your harum-scarum, skip-jack ways.'

'I don't see why I shouldn't jump about when I am going to die as well as at any other time,' I answered. 'There's nothing wrong in exercise.'

That made her angry, and she talked and talked; while I sat there thinking how I should take that message.

When she was gone—and a good thing too—I said to Jake, 'I've made my plans.'

'What are they?' he asked.

Then I told him. It was then four o'clock. I should have a good meal, get some things I wanted, and dress for the journey. As soon as it was dark I would go through the British lines; that would not be difficult for one who, like me, was accustomed to go out stalking game. Once through the lines, I should go and lie down in a certain little dip in the veldt which we both knew. Meanwhile Jake was to go and undertake to get the message carried, saying he knew a runner who would take it; but he was to refuse to give any particulars. I thought they would probably give him the message, and watch him. If he got the message he was to go home, double it up into a little clip I made ready for it in our dog Dick's collar, and then he was to go walking about just inside the lines as if expecting his runner. Dick, I felt sure, would go scrimmaging about as he always did, and find me out. If he didn't, and the worst came to the worst, I meant to whistle; but that would be risky.

When I had the message safe, I would give two low notes like a night-bird twice. Then Jake was to whistle for Dick, and I should start off for the hills. Jake was to walk about for another good hour, as if still expecting his runner; and then he could go home and rest, and his part of the job would be done. If any one asked him after that, I said he could tell the truth,

but not till I had been gone a good hour, otherwise they would be running after me.

When I had finished the explanation of my plans, Jake asked me what I should do if they did not give him the message.

'Why, I shall have to come back at one o'clock—that's all; but, you'll see, they will give it to you. Now let's have a good tea.'

So Jake fried some bacon, and I boiled some eggs and made the coffee, and we had pickles, marmalade, and honey—quite a spread. When we had finished I put the coffee-grounds in a small tub with some hot water.

'What is that for?' asked Jake.

'Wait, and you will see.'

Then I went to my room, and got out my evening skirt—white nun's-veiling it was. I took off the pretty pale-blue sash, and almost cried as I did so. It was my best frock, and I knew I looked well in it. But there; I am not a fashionable girl, so I hardened my heart, rolled it up in a bundle, and plumped it into the tub with the coffee-grounds.

'My eye!' said Jake, 'if I had done that, now, would not there have been a shindy? I thought you loved that toggery as dearly as yourself; but there is no understanding a girl.'

"My eye!" is vulgar; that skirt is the only one that will suit for this. If I wear it white it will probably be my shroud. I am going to the store now; at the end of half-an-hour take out that skirt and dry it at the fire. If it does not get yellow enough, put in some more coffee.'

'One would think you were a major at least by your orders,' grumbled Jake, as he began to jogget about the tub with the skirt in it.

By dusk I was ready. I had on a soft gray felt hat, cycling knickerbockers under the brown-gray skirt, and a thin gray woollen blouse. I also wore tennis-shoes and wash-leather spats. I had a little bag of provisions and a water-flask strapped round my waist, so that my hands were free except for a stick which had an arm-loop to it. I had also a small revolver and a pair of glasses, and felt ready for anything.

I enjoyed getting through the lines unnoticed, and dodging the search-light by lying down sharp when I saw it coming; but when I had got to my hiding-place—oh, it was dull! Time went on, and no sign of Dick. I nearly went to sleep. At last, at about twelve o'clock, suddenly Dick rushed up and began licking my face. I got the message out of his collar, gave him a good kiss, and made the signal; and Jake whistled for him. Then I trekked off as hard as I could, going down flat as a pancake each time the search-light swept round, and then running on in the darkness.

I knew there were hardly any Boer pickets the way I was taking, as they never supposed any one would make for a high wall of rock

as I was going to do; still, I had to be very careful, and feared I should not get into shelter before morning. This fear made me hurry up, as I had no wish to be forced to lie flat in the burning sun the whole day through.

As it was I was almost too late, for the day was dawning as I arrived at the foot of my precipice. I rolled up my skirt tight, and swung myself up to a shady cranny that I knew, and then I had a few mouthfuls of food and some water, and went to sleep.

Jake meanwhile—he told me afterwards—had been shadowed by Major Grayhairs, as we called him, and had had quite a pleasing time: first by exciting his curiosity, and afterwards by telling him the truth when all was settled. Jake said he swore like anything, and positively ramped about. They had gone home; and Jake, to poke him up more, said, 'This is a Christian family, and we don't allow such profanity'—which was true, only there was no one in the house but Jake; and he often says 'The dickens!' himself.

The Major threatened to have Jake locked up.

'That's a new way of rewarding heroism,' said Jake. "'Quad" the chap's relations! What do you think Marjory would say when she returned?'

Major Grayhairs went off fuming, and Jake went to bed. He ought to have passed a sleepless night thinking of his dear sister, I told him; but he said, 'Rot! I slept like beans.'

I slept well too in the early morning in my little rocky niche; but about noon the big guns began booming; then I awoke, and, getting out my glasses, had a look round. I was very careful how I did it, though, for Boers have eyes like needles, and I had no fancy for being found.

There was not much to see, and I got deadly dull again waiting there. I snoozed every now and again; but I was afraid of oversleeping myself. I had packed in my little bag slices of bread spread thick with Bovril, which is a good way of keeping one's self going with little to carry. I drank all my water, and wanted more; but there was none, so I had to do without.

At last dusk came, and I clambered down and took my way carefully along among the rocks at the foot of the precipice. I was looking for a narrow watercourse, which was very difficult to find in the darkness, and was beginning to despair altogether when I managed to hit on it. I went up for some couple of hundred yards until it became quite narrow; then the going was so rough that I had to wait for dawn. I knew I was hidden from view, so I did not mind. When light came I found I was standing close to a big snake, which gave me a jump; however, he went his way into his hole, and I went mine.

The thing that bothered me most was want of water. I knew I could not get a drop until I had been climbing hard for several hours, for the watercourse was quite dry. The water-

course was really a great crack in the rock which went on for miles through the hills. I had discovered it long ago; but I had kept it as a child's secret, and I did not suppose many, if any, other people knew of it. I clambered on, feeling very thirsty, with two walls of rock towering above me on either side, and thought of the song about a flower that lived in a cranny and learned to grow straight and tall in consequence. I was feeling rather low, you see, as the flower was.

Happily, at last I reached what I was fond of calling 'Paradise.' At the entrance of a cave in the right-hand wall of rock was a deep, clear pool of water. Climbing over the rock outside was a vine which I had planted long ago, meaning some day to live in the cave like Robinson Crusoe. I blessed that fancy now, for the vine was thick with bunches of grapes, and I ate them with delight as I sat by the pool. Then I wished for Puck to keep snakes away; but as he was not there I went to sleep, and hoped for the best. I cannot stand snakes.

As evening fell I went on again; this time through the cave, which I knew would bring me out on the other side of the hill. I can assure you I went warily; for it struck me that the Boers might well be in the farther entrance. Such, indeed, proved to be the case. For the last four or five yards, before reaching the sort of grotto which made the other end of the cave, the passage rose about three feet high by two feet wide, with a trickle of water at the bottom, so that crawling along it was not pleasant going.

When I reached a more roomy spot, I waited and peered onward through the twilight. I saw the glimmer of the stars through wreaths of smoke which curled from a fire of brushwood outside the arched entrance. There was a strong smell of roast mutton, and I came to the conclusion that some one had been making a good supper.

Very quietly I crawled a couple of yards farther, and now became aware of three Boers stretched on the ground just inside the cave.

'Asleep,' I said to myself. 'But where is the Boer who sleeps with both eyes shut?'

Now the puzzle was, How could I get past them and out of the cave? Should I go back into the narrow tunnel and wait for morning? No; that was too damp an idea. There was a sort of crack, or rather shelf, along the side of the cave near the roof. Could I get along that? Possibly. At any rate it was worth trying.

Slowly I drew myself up to it, and then, lying full length on the ledge of rock, crept forward inch by inch. It was quite exciting.

When I got about level with the Boers I looked down and saw they were really asleep. Then certainly there must be a sentry. One of the Boers had evidently put aside a bit of roast

neck of mutton for to-morrow's dinner; it was just under the ledge of rock I was looking over.

'All is fair in war,' I said. 'That is probably a British farmer's sheep. Why should not I dine off it instead of leaving it for the Boers?'

I crooked a pin and fastened it to a piece of string, knotted the string to my stick, and then set to work fishing. Soon I hooked the mutton, and began to haul. Half-way up the hook came out, and down came the mutton bang on the nearest Boer's head.

I lay low and listened. It was not quite drawing-room conversation that began after that. All three Boers started up, and the mutton-bumped Boer abused the other two, and they swore he had a nightmare.

Then the sentry came and declared that, if they could not sleep, he could; and as the other two who had been disturbed took his part, it ended in the poor bruised Boer having to watch outside while the others snored. I was sorry for him; but it is the way of the world.

Now it struck me very forcibly that I had not mended matters for myself, for the new sentry was irritated and likely to be wide awake, so I should have a job to get past him. At any rate he must be left to cool down. Meanwhile I again turned my attention to the mutton. I felt I really must have some of that mutton; so, when once the Boers were asleep, I began fishing again. This time I was very careful and steady, and managed my haul all right. I cut off a slice and proceeded to eat it. It was beautiful! I had some more; then I cut off a chop and packed it up for future use.

Now came the time to get out of the cave. I crept along the shelf to the entrance; but there sat the sentry, looking as cross as two sticks, and anything but sleepy.

What could I do? Happy thought! There was the remains of the mutton! I threw it at one of the sleepers. Yells followed, and in darted the sentry. Now was my chance! I slipped down like a cobra, and scuttled.

I expected they would see me; but they didn't. I got safe away behind some rocks. I saw the Boers' baggage-mule grazing below. For want of something better, I thought I would ride that. I crept up to it, not daring to stand erect. The mule was hobbled with a rope, and had a halter knotted round its head. I got hold of the halter, and dragged the animal along to some low bushes. There I got the hobbles off, and led it farther. I suppose the Boers did not trouble much about their mule, thinking it could not go far.

It was a clear night; but at last, when I had got beyond the range of their vision, I mounted.

If you want something agreeable in the way of riding, let me recommend a baggage-mule, with no saddle and only a halter for bridle; a mule determined to stay where he is, and not go your way. It was quite a holiday treat; but when he



did start, the speed of a locomotive engine was nothing to it; and as morning dawned we arrived at the river.

I tied the mule to a stump where it could get at the water, and considered its fate. It could get a halter's-length of feed, and it had had a good deal to eat that night. If I did not come back, a Kaffir would be certain to find and take it. If I did come back, it would be important to know exactly where to find the beast. So I wished it farewell, and took to the river.

Now, I love swimming; but there is nothing so exhausting as swimming in a rapid stream. I waded as far as I could, and then went jumping on on tip-toes, paddling with my hands. Before I started I unloaded the revolver, and put weapon and cartridges inside my hat. When it was really necessary to strike out, I came to the conclusion that a hat with a revolver in it is a weighty style of millinery, and I returned to my depth, and was meditating leaving my little snapper in the mule's charge when I saw an empty box floating down. I got to this, and it just gave me the necessary buoyancy; so, by a tortuous course, I gained the farther bank.

Wet and wretched, I stumbled on, dripping, to a little thicket of scrub, and lay down for a good half-hour before I even had energy to eat that mutton. Here I reloaded my revolver, sat in the sun to dry myself, and then curled up and went to sleep. About one o'clock I woke, and did my hair, washed my hands, shook down my skirt, and made myself as presentable as I could.

I walked on to the farm of some people I knew, and got them to lend me an old pony, which I rode on to the British lines, where I handed over my despatches, but did not let out who had carried them.

'Would my messenger go back?'

'Yes, if it was of importance.'

'Would he go that very night?'

I thought of a night's rest at the farm; but no, Queen and country first. Besides, there was that Satanic-tempered mule to be considered. So in two hours' time I was trotting back.

Then it was *da capo*—the other way on—as evening fell! Box, river, mule; and didn't that mule swear! Oh! it swore like a hungry gorilla. But it had to go where I wished all the same.

I can tell you one thing: it is all very well to go through a river at daybreak, and dry yourself afterwards in the sun; and it's another thing to go through the same river in the chill of night, and have to ride a mule in wet clothes afterwards. But, as Jake says, 'One must not expect life to be all beer and skittles.'

Dry or wet, then, I rode along till I got near the entrance to the cave; there I hid away among the rocks and waited for morning, as I did not wish to chance on the Boers again. When light came nothing was to be

seen of the Boers but a broken tobacco-pipe. Whether they had destroyed each other, like the Kilkenny cats, or whether they were seeking the mule, I did not know, and did not care. I set to work to crawl along the narrow passage out of sight lest they should happen round again. A clatter in the distance I did hear, but no one saw me; and thankful I was as the day grew hot to rest in the sun by the pool at the other end of the cave. Going down the watercourse was easy work; still, by the time I got to the veldt I began to think that if I had been broken on the wheel my poor dear bones could not have ached more.

As darkness fell, once more I crouched down in the hollow and called the night-bird's cry. Then Jake whistled, and I got up and stumbled on over the grass.

What happened next I hardly remember. There were shouts and shakings of hands, and Jake and Major Grayhairs almost carried me home, where I gave my message to the Major; and Jake made some tea, which I drank, and then went to bed.

Now, when you tell a story, I know you are supposed to put a grand ending to it; but I have nothing grand to tell you. Nothing more came of all this except a certain amount of bother, because of the folly of mankind.

Now, what a man wants in a wife in South Africa is a woman who can cook and do house-keeping on week-days and dress in fine feathers on Sundays to keep up his self-respect. Nevertheless, just because I went careering across the country, lots of silly men wanted me to marry them, which put me out of patience. However, I kept my temper, and told them I had no thoughts of settling; but they were not pleased, which was 'hard on a fellow,' for I never wanted them to come bothering me.

Major Grayhairs says I am very sensible, and he does not think of settling at present himself. When he said that, Jake whistled. Jake is a tire-some boy.

*God Save the Queen.*

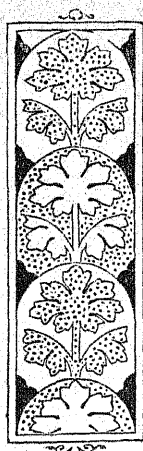
#### THE BUTTERFLIES.

THE butterflies, like pansies, freed  
From earthy ties, make airy sport;  
They dally with the wistful weed,  
Or to the meadow-queen pay court.

The butterflies—like thoughts of mine,  
Forgetful of their lowly birth—  
Are brave in all the summer shine  
And merry in the moment's mirth.

The butterflies and I must go.  
Ah, well! To-day has yet to pass;  
And we are quite content to know  
The blue skies and the sunny grass.

J. J. BELL.



# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

TO BLOEMFONTEIN BEHIND LORD ROBERTS.

BY A CAPETOWN CIVILIAN.



BLOEMFONTEIN, the capital of the Orange River Colony—or, as it has been rechristened by Mr Rudyard Kipling, 'Bobsfontein'—cannot be called either a pretty or an imposing place. It lies in the midst

of rolling plains; and, as in the case of the fly in amber, the wonder is how it got into its present position. Proximity to water or some other natural advantages have generally more or less to do with the foundation of a capital town; but in the present instance none of these factors apply. The streets are methodically laid out in rectangular style, after the usual South African design, and the Raadzaal, Presidency, and some of the other public buildings are fairly creditable; but there is a decided lack of finish about the town generally; it has been sadly backward in its growth, and seems to want a strong tonic to stimulate its development.

The chief importance of the town lies in the fact that it is situated on the high-road between Capetown, Port Elizabeth, East London, and Kimberley, so that all the traffic north must pass through it; and in the near future it bids fair to become a large and flourishing centre. The railway station, with the exception of Capetown, is the best on any South African railway.

A day or two after Lord Roberts's peaceful occupation, circumstances permitted me, with two others, to pay a visit to Bloemfontein. In fact, we were the first civilians to travel thither from the Cape Colony. The Orange River forms the natural boundary between the two territories; and as the handsome bridge, which cost nearly one hundred thousand pounds to construct, had just previously been destroyed by the Boers, the only way of getting across was by means of a small ferry-boat. The sight of the iron girders and the piers lying prone in the river-bed was indeed a melancholy one, and apparently the destruction was the result of malice aforethought, for I was credibly informed that a month before war was actually declared

charges of gun-cotton had been placed in readiness, and thus in a few moments this monument of engineering skill was rendered useless.

It was a lovely autumn morning when I was here, and the scene, one of peculiarly interesting novelty, intuitively recalled under the circumstances the well-known couplet:

Where every prospect pleases  
And only man is vile.

The expanse of water was fringed on either side by the thick foliage of the mimosa, and the lofty hills were clothed with verdure. The men of the Railway Pioneer Regiment were busily engaged in getting ready pontoons and constructing a temporary bridge, and otherwise making various efforts to overcome natural obstacles and repair the ravages and devastation so recently effected.

One of the first things to catch the eye on reaching the northern bank was a miniature Union-jack merrily waving from the branch of a native tobacco-tree, round which was gathered a concourse of soldiers, in the midst of beef and biscuit boxes and a general assortment of military equipments. Mischief was still brewing, and the coast by no means clear, for a couple of Boer snipers had only just been shot, and patrols were still out in the neighbourhood.

Drawn up on the northern bank was a train made up of Cape Government, Netherlands, and Free State coaches, the first-named having been annexed by the Free Staters when hostilities commenced last October, and communication was severed. It was soon steaming on its way to Bloemfontein, a distance of one hundred and twenty miles, the wayside stations being found to be for the most part in a deserted and chaotic state, littered in some cases with telegraph tape, official documents, and papers of various descriptions. One telegram I picked up was from a stationmaster to the Postmaster-General at Bloemfontein, dated 3rd January of the present year, and worded as follows: 'Between this and the bridge the wire is cut in two places. No wire has

been removed except small section of steel wire at the bridge. Heavy cannon-firing ceased at noon, up to which time one hundred and thirty shots were fired.' A small store kept by a Russian Jew was closed. He stated that, being provided with a passport, he was not molested; but goods were commandeered from him to the tune of twenty-five pounds. At another station the hotel proprietor reckoned his enforced contribution at four hundred pounds. At Springfontein Junction, where General Gatacre was located, the ladies' waiting-room was doing duty as his headquarters, and everything here was in a lamentable state of confusion, the last of the Boers having cleared out but a day or two previous. In normal times this station is a small Clapham Junction; but now the premises wore a most forlorn and woebegone aspect. A few advertisement plates still adorned the walls, one of them, the property of a firm of agricultural implement makers, bearing portraits of Presidents Kruger and Steyn, Mr J. H. Hofmeyr, the Chief-Justice of the Cape Colony, and Mr Rhodes, the face of the latter being disfigured beyond recognition. Of course there was nothing in the way of refreshment-rooms all along the line, and one was thankful to obtain a little milk and some coarse home-made bread. A couple of war correspondents boarded the train about half-way, and the recital of some of their experiences served admirably to beguile the tedium of the journey.

A very stirring scene was in store at a station named Kafir River, and I sincerely regretted the absence of a camera to immortalise it. All around on the veldt were outspanned considerably over a hundred vehicles of all descriptions, from the showy Cape cart to the humble mule-wagon; while the station platform was densely packed with burghers carrying guns and rifles in their hands or slung on their shoulders, ready to be given up in response to the proclamation issued by Lord Roberts. Some were bringing in their cartridges in baskets, small wallets, and even in pocket-handkerchiefs. Gray-haired men, beardless youths, and even women with children clinging to their skirts made up the crowd. Generally speaking, the burghers wore slouch-hats, with jackets and trousers of motley hue. One warrior I noticed was minus a leg, and limping about on crutches. I chatted with several of these men while the train was waiting. One of them, of gigantic stature, had two guns, one a Westley-Richards, and he seemed very anxious to know whether there was a possibility of his retaining this. Another told me he had fought at Modder River and Elands-laagte, but was very glad their share of the fighting, at all events, was over. A few of them looked rather sullen; but for the most part they were a good-humoured, innocent-looking class of men, and one could not but feel regret that their bucolic minds had been so misguided.

We reached Bloemfontein shortly after eight o'clock in the evening, the rain coming down in torrents, as it well knows how to do in these parts, with most severe thunder and lightning. Everything was under military control, and the forms of sleeping soldiers were visible all about the platforms. The four days' forced march from Paardeberg precluded much being carried in the way of tent equipment, and the gentlemen in khaki were glad to find shelter anywhere; the tables in the market-house were serving as beds, and under verandas, the portico of the Post-Office, and elsewhere Tommy Atkins was to be seen. One of them told me that on two days they marched about twenty-seven miles, and that on the scantiest allowance of food, so that their fatigue and exhaustion were not difficult to account for.

Apart from the life and spirit which the presence of the military invariably affords, and the prodigal display of the national emblem, the town itself wore pretty much its usual appearance. A few of the windows were barricaded with iron in anticipation of a possible bombardment, and when you went into the shops it was generally to find that they were unable to supply the thing wanted, stocks having run very low, and no opportunity having been afforded of replenishing them. During the four months preceding the British occupation there was no absolute pinch; but some of the necessities of life reached a fancy price: paraffin-oil, for instance, was as high as four pounds a case, and sugar one shilling and sixpence a pound; but bread, meat, and vegetables were fairly abundant. In order to prevent storekeepers from taking advantage of the presence of such a large body of troops as was massed within a radius of a few miles, a proclamation was issued by Lord Roberts fixing the price of articles in most common use, and farmers were invited to come in freely with their market produce, an assurance being given that they would in no way be molested.

There is a capital club at Bloemfontein, which was crowded with military, reading, writing, playing billiards, or lounging on the spacious balcony. In the roll of membership the Dutch element somewhat predominates, and during war-time Englishmen naturally felt under a good deal of restraint, and had to be very guarded in their speech and behaviour. On the wall in the bar a large German map of South Africa was hanging, with a small portrait of President Kruger in one corner. One day some one facetiously pierced two holes through the eyes of His Honour, which gave rise to no small indignation and high feeling.

Horse-stealing was rampant at the time I was in Bloemfontein, and was, in fact, a perfect scandal. The little coloured lads to whom the officers, when coming in from the camp, entrusted their steeds to hold, not being acquainted with the rightful owners, frequently surrendered their charge to



some one who was only a horse-thief; and in some instances the animals were even taken from the hands of boys leading them to or from the lines, marks being obliterated and tails and manes cropped so as to conceal identity.

The Café-Royal in Market Square was converted into a military post-office for a short time; but on the 20th of March postal and telegraph business was resumed in the ordinary building, and there was a great rush for the surcharged Free State stamps, which bore the letters V.R.I. In some cases, probably in the hurry in printing, the letter 'I' had dropped out; and these and other 'errors' were seized upon with avidity by philatelists, who stand to make a good thing out of their venture.

Formerly Bloemfontein boasted of two newspapers, the *Express* and the *Friend of the Free State*; but both these have vanished, and the fourth estate is represented by a new *Friend*, a daily publication edited by the war correspondents with Lord Roberts, containing general news, military intelligence, orders from headquarters, and so on. The following lines from the pen of Mr Rudyard Kipling, which appeared in the first number, are thoroughly characteristic:

Oh, Terence dear! and did you hear  
The news that's going round?  
The Shamrock's Erin's badge by law  
Where'er her sons be found.

From Bobsfontein to Ballyhook,  
'Tis ordered by the Queen;  
We've won our right in open fight:  
The wearing of the green.

Bloemfontein has a fort on the northern side of the town situated on elevated ground; but its demolition would certainly not be a work of very serious difficulty. Here, and at the military barracks hard by, the scene was a gay and animated one, the band playing, colours flying, and British troops constantly moving to and fro. A handsome monument is erected at this spot to the memory of the burghers who fell in the Basuto campaign of 1865-68, and in the peaceful cemetery just below lie the remains of President Brand of honoured memory, his tomb covered with artificial wreaths, all in an excellent state of preservation. Standing here, within earshot of the fifes and drums, one could not but reflect on the kaleidoscopic experiences of life. Had this good, broad-minded man been alive to-day war's rude alarms would never, in all human probability, have invaded the little republic to which he was so devotedly attached and for whose interests he strove so zealously, and it would still have preserved that independence which it so dearly prized.

[At noon on Monday, 28th May, the annexation of the Orange Free State to the British Empire was formally proclaimed in the Market Square of Bloemfontein by the Military Governor, General Pretymann. The town was decorated: and the ceremony, in which a large body of British troops took part, was of an imposing character. The Military Governor read the proclamation of annexation, which announced that the State is henceforth to be known as the Orange River Colony.]

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

### CHAPTER VI.—MDLLE. X.: HER TROUBLE.



WE had capital times together—Vaurel and I; and I soon fell into the habit of strolling down to the little stone house by the river each morning, with a couple of bottles of red wine in my pockets and a yard-long loaf of bread in my hand as my contributions towards the commissariat department. After breakfast and a smoke we punted up the river or fished down it, or strolled through the woods while Vaurel potted superfluous wood-pigeons for the provisioning of the great house and the small one.

He was of a jovial and reckless disposition; and bit by bit I learned much of his history, and, in still more fragmentary fashion, picked up sundry scraps of information concerning mademoiselle. For many days the Château showed no signs of occupancy beyond a curl of blue smoke, against the dark background of trees, from one solitary chimney. The brown wooden Venetian shutters along the river-front remained tightly closed; and, sharply as I watched the house, I never caught

sight of a soul except on two or three occasions when the old priest walked the terrace on this side of the house, pacing slowly to and fro as if in deep thought, and always alone.

I had to be very wary in my search for information, for any direct question put either to Jeanne, or to Vaurel, or to Louis Vard, even in the most roundabout way, concerning mademoiselle of the Château simply had the effect of bringing the conversation to a full stop.

Briefly, what I had gathered in four days was this: Mademoiselle Denise des Comptes, who was at the Château, was, with her brother Gaston, owner of all the land round about. They were wealthy, and when mademoiselle was at the Château there was no want in the neighbourhood. The softened inflections which came into their voices whenever they spoke of 'ma'm'selle' conveyed to my mind a sense of loving reverence which told me more than many words. It was surely a very sweet and sympathetic nature which could evoke so warm a feeling in the hearts of these stolid peasants, whom Nature herself treated

somewhat indifferently at times and provided for none too bountifully. But when mademoiselle came to stop at the Château hard times fled before her, and the villagers looked forward to her coming as hopefully as ice-bound voyagers look for the summer. This time, however, since the night of her arrival with the Abbé Dieufoy, she had never stirred out of the house, and none of her old friends up in the village had set eyes on her—no one, in fact, except Madame Tiraud, the housekeeper, and Hortense, her daughter. Mademoiselle had shut herself up in her room, and refused to see even M. Dieufoy. What the trouble was Hortense could not say; but trouble there was of some kind, and that of the gravest.

I could not help noticing that the others did not debate with Hortense the possible nature of mademoiselle's trouble. Hortense was a rattle-brain; and while she rattled on they were silent. It seemed to me that they knew what the trouble was, but that they did not care to discuss it with Hortense, as one does not discuss weighty matters with a child.

Roussel's expression, 'She is disgraced,' came once into my mind and was promptly ejected. No personal disgrace could attach to that sweet-faced girl; I was ready to stake my life on that. But what the trouble was I could not get at; and, as I have said, any direct attempt thereat simply resulted in a frosty silence.

Vaurel was, if possible, worse than any one else. Whenever I craftily worked the conversation round in the direction of Mademoiselle Denise and her trouble, he just shook his head and said, 'Pardon, monsieur! let us talk of something else.'

'Thud—thud! thud—thud!' he would say, looking down at the mill. 'All that and the farm up above ought to have been mine; but I was no man of business, and I wanted to the wars. So I left it to my brother Gautier, and he is getting fat on it, and I shoot wood-pigeons and catch trout.'

'That was not very prudent.'

'No, *mon dieu*! Prudent by name, but never by nature,' he said, laughing. 'But what's the odds? I live and I'm happy, and I have no cares; while Gautier has a shrew of a wife and six brats who all take after her. I'm not sure but I'm better off than he is after all; and, anyhow, I did man's work for my country.'

One day, as we sat on the bench smoking, we saw the old priest pacing slowly to and fro on the terrace.

'*Tenez*! see the black crow yonder,' said Vaurel. 'For me, I do not like those gentry. They make much trouble in the family at times. I wonder if my little friend here'—fondling his revolver with the long barrel—'would be as good at crows as at the pigeons. If I knew just what ma'm'—but he did not finish his thoughts aloud. 'I would like to try Boulot on him,' he said after a while. 'No, I do not like those gentlemen of the long robe.'

'Why? What have they done to you?'

'To me?' he cried. 'Nothing. I always snapped my fingers at them; but I have watched them on others, sucking their blood like leeches as long as there was anything left to suck. Pah! *le bon Dieu* is served in many queer ways in this country, and has to stand scapegoat for many queer things. It's a queer world, monsieur!'

'That's an original discovery of yours, Vaurel, and does you credit. Why don't you try to improve things?'

'What can one man do?' he would say, shrugging off all responsibility as a duck shakes the water off its back.

When we got on the subject of the war, the mismanagement at headquarters, and the criminal stupidities of the leadership, he would wax furiously eloquent, as one who had seen with his own eyes and suffered in his own body from these things.

'Ah!' he would cry, 'I grind my teeth even now at the thought of it all. There we were, ill-clad, ill-shod, ill-found, but with the hearts of men—the hearts of Frenchmen—ready to fight to the last gasp; and the fools at the top—the ten-thousand-times fools, who ought to have known everything, and knew less than nothing—they played with us and mishandled us till our hearts were as thin as our boots and as empty as our stomachs. Ah! if we had had a real Bonaparte, a real chip of the old block, to lead us, and none of your painted bastard Dutchmen, why, we would have mopped those pigs of Prussians all over their cursed sausage-land. My faith, yes! But there were many queer things in those days, monsieur. I was in the front rank at Wörth. We were rushing down the slope at the Prussians. The captain of my regiment was just in front of me, a perfect devil of a man—as brave as men are made, but a martinet, a tartar, an insolent—Lepard his name was. He was just in front of me, and he suddenly flung up his arms and fell on his face, and I saw the bullet go into him, and it went in from the back.'

'You mean one of his own men shot him?'

He nodded. 'He was a fiend; but he was a brave man. I picked him up afterwards. The bullet had gone through him; but he was not dead. I told the surgeon he was cheering us on with his back to the Prussians when the bullet struck him; and the surgeon looked at me and said, "Quite so! But you see, my friend, the Prussian bullet does not make the same kind of a wound as the French bullet, and I quite understand." I guess he was not the only one. Yes indeed, there were lots of queer things happened in those days.'

This slow quiet woodland life was eminently restful; but I began to ask myself what end I was serving by staying at Cour-des-Comptes. I was no nearer making the acquaintance of Mdle. X.

than on the first day of my arrival, and often I said to myself that I was simply wasting my time and doing no good by hanging about in this fashion. But all the while I knew that I could no more pack up my traps and go than I could take out my heart and leave it under the bench for Boulot to play with.

She was there, somewhere in the grim, gray Château by the river, and she was in trouble; and my heart had gone out to her, for the sake of her sweet face and the pure soul that shone out through her eyes, before ever I knew who she was or had ever set eyes upon her. Who could say but that the time might come when she would want my help? On the bare chance I would wait a lifetime.

Lying on the grass watching my float, sitting on the bench watching the Château through the smoke of my pipe, lying awake in the night in Jeanne's box-bed, I pieced together again and again the meagre scraps of information I had been able to glean from the short-cut sentences of Vaurel and Jeanne and Louis Vard, and turned them over and over in my mind, and groped for the meaning of things, and so came at last to a resolution, which might or might not prove a wise one. It depended on Jeanne, and for Jeanne I had come to have a very high respect.

I proceeded to put the matter to the test.

The following night I lingered smoking in the room downstairs till the poor old village fathers had stumbled away home, and even Louis Vard had brought his lingering farewells to an end. Mère Thibaud had already retired, leaving Jeanne to close up, as was her custom when her customers stopped later than usual.

Jeanne bolted the door and glanced inquisitively at me. I generally took my departure as soon as the last man went, so as not to interrupt her *tête-à-tête* with Louis.

'Jeanne,' I said, 'get me another candle. I want to show you something. Will you come upstairs for a moment?'

She looked a trifle astonished, but got the candle and lighted it, and followed me up the stairs. I had fastened the portrait of Mdlle. X. to the dark wood panel of the room just over one of the big chests. I set the candles on the chest and closed the door behind her.

She stood for a moment looking at the lovely face, and then said:

'*Mon dieu!* it is mademoiselle! Where did you get it, monsieur?'

'In Paris.'

'She gave it to you? I did not know you knew her.'

'No. I have never spoken to her, Jeanne.'

'*Dame!* that is curious;' and her brows arched in surprise.

'I saw that picture in the Salon, and the moment I saw it there was no other picture there for me. Her face bewitched me, Jeanne,

and I felt that I could lay down my life to serve her, though I could not find out who she was or whether there was any such person.'

Jeanne nodded sagely. 'You are in love with mademoiselle.'

'With her portrait at all events. I have never spoken to her.'

'All the same, you are in love with her,' nodded Jeanne, as one who knew.

'Well, maybe. Now, Jeanne, she is in trouble. How can I help her?'

Jeanne pondered with her eyes on mademoiselle's sweet face, but still hesitated to speak what she knew.

'See now, Jeanne, let me tell you in two words about myself. I was first officer on board ship. An old gentleman, a passenger, fell overboard. I jumped after him and saved his life. A year later he died, and left me by his will five million francs'—

'Five—millions—of—francs!' murmured Jeanne in an awe-struck whisper. 'Goodness! What a fortune!'

'They are at the disposition of mademoiselle, Jeanne, together with my head and my heart, if that will help her in her trouble.'

Jeanne nodded very knowingly, as if thinking. 'Yes, you are in love with her without doubt.'

'Now, I want your assistance, Jeanne; and if you will help me—come of it what may—I shall give you on your wedding-day a dowry of ten thousand francs.'

'Well,' exclaimed Jeanne, clasping her hands, 'what is it monsieur requires of me?'

'Tell me how I can help mademoiselle. First, what is the trouble? Until I know that, I can do nothing, for I am all in the dark.'

'Monsieur means well by mademoiselle?' she asked, with a last lurking doubt.

'What do you think yourself, Jeanne?' I asked, taking her hand and looking straight into her big black eyes.

'But yes, monsieur, I know it; and Louis says the same: you are a man to trust.'

'Then, tell me—what is mademoiselle's trouble?'

'It is this, monsieur; and the reason why we do not speak of it is that it hurts us. It touches the family honour, and so the honour of all of us. We down here do not believe a word of it, but yet it is there; and in Paris they say it is true. Mademoiselle's brother, Monsieur Gaston, is in terrible disgrace. They say he has sold France—given away the secrets of the army—betrayed his country. I do not believe it, nor do any of us here; but in Paris they believe it, and he has been degraded and deported—the poor boy; and such a fine boy, too! Ah, it is impossible! Our poor mademoiselle! It is killing her. Now, how can monsieur help?'

'And the priest—what is he after?' I asked.

'Monsieur l'Abbé Dieufoy?' She shrugged her shoulders expressively. 'He is trying to persuade



mademoiselle to take the veil. Mademoiselle is rich, you understand, monsieur, and the Church has always need of money.' Even in her whisper her voice rang hard and none too friendly to the grasping brotherhood. 'Now, tell me, monsieur, what can I do to help? Mademoiselle is very dear to all of us, and if the Church takes her we all suffer too.'

'How does mademoiselle herself regard the matter, Jeanne?'

'Hortense tells us she is worn with grief. She will drop into their greedy mouths like a cherry if she is left to them long enough. It is endless, you understand, monsieur—morning, noon, and night, day in, day out. At last she will be worn out, and she will say, "Very well; do anything you like, only leave me alone." Then—good-bye to the world, and she is gone, and we shall see her no more. She is meant for something better than that, monsieur.'

'Surely!' said I, pondering the situation.

'Tell me what I can do, monsieur.'

'This is all I can think of at the moment, Jeanne. Send word to mademoiselle—Hortense would do'—

'She talks too much. I will go myself.'

'That will be much better. Convey to mademoiselle, then, Jeanne, that the Englishman she saw in the train the other day would deem it the highest privilege of his life to be permitted to render her any assistance in his power, and—and'—

'I shall know what to say,' said Jeanne, with a knowing nod and a sparkle of the eyes. 'It will cheer mademoiselle to know that some one wants to help her.'

'God bless you, Jeanne! How soon will you see her?'

'To-morrow I will go to see my aunt, and I will see mademoiselle and speak with her.'

So I had made my first approach on the citadel where my heart was already prisoner, and I waited impatiently for the passage of the hours till I should hear how my envoy had fared.

It was late in the afternoon of the following day that Jeanne tripped softly up the stairs to my room, where I had been impatiently awaiting her for more than an hour.

Her eyes were asparkle and her face aglow with her rapid return from the Château and the enjoyment of her mission.

'Well, Jeanne, you have fared well?'

'But yes, monsieur. I think I have done all monsieur could wish.'

'I hope mademoiselle did not consider it an impertinence on the part of a stranger?'

'She was very, very sad at first. Never have I seen her so sorrowful and hopeless-looking. And then I told her of the picture, monsieur, and she was greatly surprised. When I said you were the Englishman she had seen in the train she nodded and said, "I remember," and a little light came into her eyes and a little colour into her cheek; and when I told her you were ready to lay down your life to help her'—

'Did you say that?'

She nodded briskly. 'When I told her that, she asked, "Does he believe Gaston guilty?"—and I assured her you did not'—

'But, Jeanne, I know nothing about it.'

'Do you believe mademoiselle's own brother could do such a thing?' she asked scornfully.

'Certainly not, Jeanne.'

'Very well, then—that's what I told her. I said you felt certain, with all the rest of us, that some horrible mistake had been made, and you were ready to do everything in your power to have it all made clear. Then mademoiselle kissed me, and there were tears in her eyes. What lovely eyes she has, monsieur!'

I nodded. 'And then?'

'And then she said, "Tell monsieur that his sympathy has done me good, and that I am grateful for it, and shall not feel quite so lonely and helpless." Then she asked me to come and see her again, and said that I had done her good.'

'Jeanne, you are an angel.'

'That is what Louis says, monsieur; but, all the same, it is me myself in person whom he wants to marry.'

'I shall hope to dance at your wedding, Jeanne.'

'With mademoiselle?' she laughed merrily, and fled down the stair to see to the dinner.

(To be continued.)

## THE HUMOURS OF 'LIVING PICTURE' MAKING.

By VICTOR W. COOK.

**P**LEASE send sausages at once.' There was something so frankly vulgar about that telegram, lying naked and unashamed on a table littered with scientific memoranda, that it held attention and stimulated curiosity to make wild guesses at its possible import. The rest of the study contained not the least suggestion of pork-butcher- ing, while the

view from the windows comprised grassy, tree-grown slopes, vivid with the verdure of the spring. In one part of the grounds was a chalybeate well, to whose bitter waters St Ann has lent her name and patronage.

St Ann's Well and wild gardens have a reputation in the sister towns of Brighton and Hove as a pleasant summer resort; but very few people, even locally, are aware what strange cargoes

go to and from the well and London every day, and how world-wide are the dealings of Mr Albert Smith, its proprietor. For in this quiet retreat is carried on what is, outside the United States, probably the largest manufacture and development in the world of the crowning marvel of the closing century—the 'living picture.'

It was, as the inquirer subsequently discovered, a big London firm who were so impatient for Mr Smith to 'send sausages at once.' That apparently vulgar telegram referred, of course, to a very popular picture, in which vigorously protesting pigs, cats, and dogs are unceremoniously bundled into a sausage-machine, while a gentleman with a beaming face turns them out as sausages as fast as they go in.

Our inquirer was on the point of asking how this feat was accomplished, when Mr Smith asked, 'Would you like to see a "kissing" film?' Where is the man with soul so dead that he would not like to see a 'kissing' film? One could merely endeavour not to betray too much haste in answering, 'Oh—well—if it really wouldn't be troubling you.'

'No trouble at all. Here you are—seventy-five yards of kissing.' Mr Smith stepped to a shady corner of the room where there stood what at the first glance looked like a hat-stand hung with a couple of wet waterproofs. Closer inspection showed it to be one mass of delicate narrow celluloid films, yard upon yard, running up and down in long folds. It looked as if there might be a mile or so of it altogether. Beside it, on a table, lay a lot of small round tin boxes. Indeed, the room seemed everywhere full of these little tins. From one of them Mr Smith took what to a casual eye looked like a roll of black tape closely perforated each side with small holes. For yard after yard Mr Smith unwound it, and then held a foot or so up to the light. Each inch was a tiny picture, every detail perfect in sharpness and clearness. The scene was a lady and gentleman in a railway carriage. As the roll was passed through Mr Smith's fingers you could see how the gentleman took off his hat by hairbreadths, and the lady turned up her face with a charming good-nature. Hairbreadth by hairbreadth the faces drew closer, and then there were 'times' in that railway carriage!

No one nowadays wants to be told what is an cinematograph, biograph, kinematograph, vitascope, or whatever the fancy of the manipulator chooses to call it. A music-hall is shockingly behind the times if, every few weeks or so, it has not a supply of these strangely fascinating pictures, that record life and motion so vividly that they seem to represent an opening in the canvas through which we look on the real thing rather than pictures. It is easy enough to take them, if you have a properly fitted camera. A pull of a button here, and a twist of a screw there, a turn of a handle, and the yards of film run rapidly through

the machine, and 'there's a picture for you!' But the preparation of the picture for exhibition is a very difficult matter. Not many people can do it yet; and Mr Smith, who was one of the earliest to begin upon the art, has pictures for developing sent to him from nearly all the leading firms in England; and not only from England, but from the Continent, India, Australia, and—most remarkable thing of all—from America. America, to be sure, as Mr Smith remarked with a sigh of resignation, occasionally repays him for developing her films by pirating any exceptionally good ones taken by him which he circulates under his English patents. Scenes from disturbed Cape Colonies, or a quiet farmyard, or gorges in the Rocky Mountains, or burning plains in Africa, the Universal Exhibition at Paris, or Queen Victoria at tea—all manner of negatives come to him to be turned out into the completed picture. When it is remembered that these delicate films, taken at the rate of sixteen pictures to the second, twice during the course of their preparation cost the operator at the rate of a pound a minute, it is needless to lay emphasis on the skill that is requisite on the part of those who have to deal with them.

Out in St Ann's Gardens stands the developing factory, an unpretentious-looking building. Mr Smith opened the door, and, stepping inside, pointed to a number of great wooden wheels not unlike mill-wheels, standing higher than a tall man. In the middle of the wheels, which were driven by an electric motor, and in charge of a young lady, were arrangements for supplying heat; and all round the circumference were wound yards and yards of the thin dark film, drying, after having passed through the developing bath. As the wheels are slowly turned, each part of the film, passing above the source of heat, is gradually dried. At first the wheels used to be turned by hand; but the tremendous demand for animatograph pictures caused Mr Smith to have others constructed, worked by electricity.

Each exhibited picture means two distinct developings, one of the original negative film, and the other of the positive film which is printed from the negative, and which is the one actually shown. The printing of this positive is one of the most delicate of all mechanical operations, the two films must be superposed with such perfect accuracy. As we stood in the laboratory the brilliant light of an electric lamp shone through a red glass window into the dark room, whence there suddenly arose a rapid thudding—the noise of the printing-machine. This continued a few seconds, and then ceased.

'If that man has made a slip it will have cost me a sovereign,' said Mr Smith. 'It just happens that I have got a new perforating-machine at work to-day for the first time. The perforating-machines wear out sometimes, of course, and the arrival of a new one is always a source

of some anxiety; it must work with such microscopic accuracy.'

'That wheel is full of General Bobs,' was his next remark, pointing to one of the big wheels already spoken of. 'I had a wire this morning from my chief firm saying, "No Roberts received. Send immediately." So I have got to run him up to London quick. There are nine "Bobs" films on that wheel, showing the General leaving the vessel, at Capetown, which took him to the seat of war. It is one of the most popular of the war-pictures.'

'I suppose there is a great run on pictures in any way connected with South African affairs just now?'

Mr Smith answered that his hands were so full he hardly knew where to turn. For every film with any connection with the war the demand was enormous. President Kruger getting out of his carriage, scenes in Johannesburg, scenes of embarking and disembarking troops, of manœuvres of cavalry and infantry, could not be developed fast enough.

'Now that the way is open, they are coming home with every mail. Almost the first lot that arrived—with pictures of the trenches at Magersfontein, of Lord Airlie's force crossing the Modder after the Enslin battle, and of another Modder River scene—was labelled on the outside, "Opened under martial law." I was scared to death, I can tell you. When I examined them I found that about twenty feet of each film had received light; but they were otherwise unhurt. It must have been a dim light—probably an oil lamp in a tent. By using a couple of extra fifty-candle-power lamps I was able to develop them all right.'

But while views of military manœuvres are easily obtainable, and heart-stirring (parade-ground) cavalry charges may be had for the trouble of taking them, genuine war-pictures, representations of actual battlefield scenes, are comparatively rare. You see, you cannot take a picture of a battle without getting into the thick of it; and as the range of the cinematograph is not so great as that of a Maxim, the chances that you would be alive to take pictures back to an admiring British audience would not be hopeful. To be sure, the makers of the cinematographs, being the most obliging people in the world, turn out desperate encounters by the dozen. As soon, for instance, as there was a demand for the charge of the 21st Lancers at Omdurman, pictures were forthcoming which had been taken at Aldershot a year or two before. 'You pays your money and you takes your choice.' But Mr Smith has a copy of one real battle-picture which he developed—the earliest one, he believes, in existence. He brought out this when we had got back among the hundreds of little tin boxes that line the study walls. The original film is the property of Mr Bennet Stanford, the war correspondent,

by whom it was taken, and it represents a portion of the English army springing from bivouac, forming up, and running forward to join in the annihilating of the Dervishes at Omdurman.

During the present war several pictures that come near to depicting actual fighting have been secured. One of the two operators whom Mr Smith's firm has in the field secured a particularly good picture of a skirmish by General French's cavalry scouts near Kimberley—a picture which is now among those on show at the London halls.

While trying to take another picture of actual fighting, Mr Bennet Stanford got hit. Mr Smith took up a film, and a letter with it. The film was very cloudy—in fact, it was all cloud. The letter was from Mr Stanford, who wrote: 'I send you film of 4.7 gun. I only had time to take one cartridge, because the return fire was so hot.' 'That film,' said Mr Smith, 'was manifestly left off in a hurry. It looks as though he had snatched up his machine and run for it.'

The topic of war-pictures naturally led up to the interesting subject of 'fakes.' Not so many months ago people were roused to astonishment by 'The Astronomer's Dream,' or 'The Haunted Castle,' where folks vanished into thin air, demons appeared in flame and smoke, witches danced and skeletons gibbered, and generally 'black art' was rampant. There were even ghosts, of a transparent and unsubstantial texture, that performed various weird and alarming pranks. How did they come? The method is ingenious and yet simple enough. Suppose you want to make a man vanish, at the right moment you stop the handle of the camera, wait till the man has walked off, and then go on. When the pictures are thrown on the screen at the rate of sixteen a second, with no stoppage, the effect is as if the man simply ceased to exist. In the same way, if the man is to appear, you stop the machine until he is at the required spot, and then resume. If he is to fly through the roof, he jumps up, and you stop at the moment when he reaches the highest point. This simple process is the key to all sorts of fantastic jugglings. The picture alluded to in the 'sausage' telegram is one of the simplest 'fakes.' All that is required is a wire-covered trough placed behind the machine, so that the machine hides it entirely. The pigs, dogs, &c. run off along the trough, and are ready to make more sausages when required.

'I get some amusing messages sometimes,' said Mr Smith, referring to the phrasing of the 'sausage' telegram. He searched on the table, and produced two or three messages. One said, 'Please forward one "Good Joke" at your earliest convenience.' Another said the sender of the message had 'two inexhaustible cabs on order,' and would Mr Smith please send some? 'No baby or greasy pole arrived,' said another message. 'Please forward at once.' A third was, 'German Emperor coming Tuesday morning. Meet if possible.'



Ghosts, in the raising of which Mr Smith is a specialist, are more difficult to produce than Astronomers' Dreams or Haunted Castles. The secret of their manufacture is that two exposures are made of the same film; but Mr Smith has introduced several cunning little devices in spirit-raising that he preserved a discreet silence about. It may be mentioned that some of his spirits were exhibited before the Queen and the Royal Family when such productions (the spirits, not the Royal Family) were quite a novelty; and the august spectators were immensely interested.

'Now, this is what I call a really beautiful ghost; though I say it who shouldn't,' said Mr Smith. 'It cost me a good deal of pains to get her; but she is the prettiest spirit I have seen anywhere. Notice her perfect transparency.'

He unrolled a few yards of a film setting forth the story of 'A Guardian Angel,' as Mr Smith calls it in his trade lists. A gambler, after losing at cards and dismissing his friends, takes a pistol, and is on the verge of suicide, when his wife's spirit comes down the staircase. The spirit sadly takes up the cards and pleads with the gambler. The result, when the picture is thrown on the screen, is a beautiful photographic effect, for the 'spirit,' though perfectly transparent, is full of detail. Upon her disappearance one of the gambler's guests returns and suggests that play shall be resumed. But the gambler's resolution is made. He seizes the cards, hurls them at the tempter, and bids him begone.

'Fakes' that are not always so beautifully 'transparent' are those dealing with public events. People want to see the Oxford and Cambridge boat-race, the launch of a new battleship, or the latest royal visit. It is obvious, however, that an event of this kind, once recorded by animatograph, may be made to do duty over again as many times as are desired. One royal procession is much like another; battleships, at a little distance, and naked as they slide from the contractor's wharf, have little to distinguish them from one another; while, as for boat-races, Mr Smith remarked that when the 1899 race came on, the principal English firm declined to send to animatograph it. They had previous boat-races, and saw no use in risking the money necessary to record this one, more especially as the day was very foggy. So last year's films were requisitioned again.

A little while ago a good many people were stirred to wonder by realistic descriptions of how trains were fitted up with animatograph developing apparatus, which enterprising persons had arranged in order to prepare pictures of events in the far provinces of England for show at the London music-halls the same night as they occurred. Mr Smith's visitor innocently asked if this were not smart work. Mr Smith, with the look of one who 'winks at Omer down the road,' answered, 'Yes, it was very smart work indeed. The trains,' he added,

smiling, 'were all fitted up as was announced; but the films—pictures of similar things that had occurred before—were all in London before the event took place!'

While speaking of 'fakes,' it may be observed that some of the most curious and diverting effects of the animatograph are to be obtained by putting the long films through backwards. Thus a man eating an apple becomes a man biting at a piece of an apple until it grows into a whole one; the fag-end of the cigarette flies up from the pavement to the mouth of the smoker, and he draws back the wreathing smoke until the cigarette has grown to its original size. The capabilities of the invention in this respect have inspired some humorous pictures. Many persons will have seen the guileless countryman at a restaurant who eats a huge pile of sandwiches; the bill is presented; it staggers him. You can imagine him protesting at the charge, and finally up goes his hand to his mouth; a sandwich gradually emerges and is placed on the counter, another and another follows, until all are back again. So with the kinematograph one can compass that impossibility—to eat one's cake and have it. An action that perhaps looks the queerest of all when presented backwards is a high dive. There is the crowd, expectantly gazing into the water. Presently the feet of the diver emerge, accompanied by a prodigious splashing. His body follows gradually, and up he goes into the air, feet foremost. At the highest point his body arches round in a graceful semi-somersault; and lo! he descends elegantly on his feet on the end of the diving-board.

'Surely things must be rather lively at times at St Ann's Well?' we inquired.

'Well, they are,' Mr Smith responded reflectively. 'I'm afraid my poor gardeners have a rough time of it. Now and then they have to vary their agricultural pursuits and sacrifice themselves to make an English holiday. Sometimes every man, woman, and child in the place has to be pressed into the service to make up a "crowd."'

So much has been said of the occasions when the animatograph does not tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, that the result may have been to convey an exaggerated notion of its capacity for setting forth the thing that is not. Like many of the great inventions that have broken upon the end of this century, it is as yet comparatively undeveloped. So far we have used it as a scientific toy for the entertainment of the public; but the days are not far distant when it will play an important part in the life of the community. Already it is possible to make a genuine pictorial record of any event occurring within reasonable distance of the Metropolis, and show the 'living picture' the same evening. But something more than this is in store. For one thing, the newspaper aspect of

'living picture' making is going to develop immensely.

'I look upon the animatograph as the illustrated newspaper of the future,' said Mr Smith. 'There can be no doubt that the time will very quickly arrive when the public will expect that not only at the music-halls, but at other places, all events of public interest shall be shown to them as they occur. It will become as customary to reserve places at public functions for the animatograph-man and his camera as it now is to set apart a place for the newspaper reporters.'

Other developments there are in store, concerning some of which it would be as yet premature to speak. For one thing, Mr Smith's firm has in preparation a drawing-room adaptation of the 'mutoscope,' which may be loaded with any films that are desired, and passed round the table for inspection. Mr Smith mentioned another development which of itself alone gives some idea of what the animatograph may do for humanity.

'One of the most distinguished surgeons in Paris,' said he, 'whom numbers of English doctors go to consult, has fitted up a special instrument in his operating-room, and performs the most intricate surgical operations in front of the kinematograph. Not much has been said about it; but he has had pictures taken in this way for some couple of years. The result has been a perfectly unique collection of kinematograph pic-

tures of the most difficult, and what I may call the most prodigious, operations. The pictures are not, of course, such as could be popularly shown; but their success has been remarkable. Such pictures will be to surgical science, as it is easy to see, of the greatest possible value. Where one distinguished surgeon was previously able to effect a cure, or to demonstrate before a small number of students, it will in future be possible to obtain a faithful record of the whole delicate operation, which record can be duplicated and shown in every clinique in Europe. The arrangements are not yet sufficiently complete to speak of; but the pictures are in the hands of my firm, and when I have printed off the positive films down here they will be supplied to qualified clinical lecturers in all parts, so that surgical science everywhere, and humanity in general, may benefit from the work of this Parisian surgeon.'

As his inquisitive visitor was departing Mr Smith put a telegram into his hand.

'Would you do me the kindness to hand that in as you pass the office?'

Open confession is good for the soul. While handing the telegram in the inquisitive one read its contents. They said, 'Large consignment Bobs early Monday.' While we had been talking the printing-machine had been thudding along, and the big drying-wheels had been turning, and Field-Marshal Lord Roberts was almost ready for the final operation of being 'run up to London quick.'

## ARRECIFOS.

CHAPTER V.—MRS TRACEY.

**T**HE whale-boat, with Barry and five hands, skimmed swiftly over the smooth waters of the lagoon before the lusty breeze; and three hours after leaving the brig she was within a quarter of a mile of the shore of a narrow little bay, embowered amidst a luxuriant grove of coco and pandanus palms. Presently Velo, the Samoan, who was standing up in the bows keeping a lookout, called out that he could see the houses of a native village, showing through the trees, about two or three miles away to the right. 'And I can see three people coming along the beach, sir,' he added presently, pointing to a spot midway between the village and the little bay for which the boat was heading.

'Well, three people can't do us any harm, Velo; so we will run into the beach and wait for them,' said Barry. 'Is it clear water ahead?'

'All clear, sir; not a bit of coral to be seen anywhere—deep water right in to the beach. Fine place, sir. Look at all those breadfruit-trees—just in back a little from the coco-nuts.'

In another five minutes the boat ploughed her

stem into the hard white sand, and the men jumped out.

'Three of you stay in the boat and keep her afloat,' said Barry; 'you, Velo, and you, Joe, come with me. We'll have a look around here, and then walk along the beach and meet those three natives.'

Taking their rifles with them, the mate, with Velo and the white sailor Joe following him closely, walked up the beach, and entered the forest of coco-palms. Every tree was laden with fruit in all stages of growth, and at Barry's request Velo at once climbed one, and threw down a score or so of young drinking-nuts.

Throwing some to the men in the boat, Barry and his companions drank the contents of one each, and then set out to look about them. Although the island was of great length, it was in no part more than a mile in width from the lagoon shore to the outer ocean beach, and the thunder of the surf on the reef could be heard every now and then amid the rustle and sighing of the palm-trees.

'It's nice to smell this 'ere hearty smell, sir—ain't it?' said Joe to the officer; 'it seems to fill yer up inside with its flavourance.'

Barry smiled. 'It does indeed, Joe. I love the smell of these low-lying coral islands.'

Apparently encouraged by his officer's polite reply to his remark, Joe—who was in the second-mate's watch—began afresh.

'I hope, sir, you won't mind my loosenin' my jaw-tackle a bit; but I'd be mighty glad, sir, if you could let me come with you in the boats when we begins the divin'.'

'I'll mention it to the captain, Joe. I'm quite agreeable.'

'Thank you, sir,' said the sailor respectfully.

This Joe was the man whom Rawlings had felled with the belaying-pin; and although, when he first came on board, Barry had conceived an unfavourable impression of him and his three companions, subsequent observation of the four had made him feel he had done Joe at least an injustice, for the man, despite his sullenness and a rather quarrelsome disposition, was a good sailor and no shirker of work. During the voyage from Sydney, Barry had scarcely had occasion to speak to this man more than half-a-dozen times; but whenever he had done so, Joe had answered him with a cheerful 'Ay, ay, sir,' and obeyed his orders promptly; whereas a command from Rawlings, Barradas, or the Greek was received in sullen silence and carried out with a muttered curse. The reason for this was not far to seek: Barry was a rigid disciplinarian, but never laid his hand on a man unless provoked beyond endurance; whilst the captain, Barradas, and the Greek boatswain were chary of neither abuse nor blows—too often without the slightest reason. Consequently, Joe and his three shipmates—who recognised him as their leader—had developed a silent though bitter hatred of all the officers except Barry—a hatred that only awaited an opportunity to take vengeance for past brutalities. All four of them—so Velo told Barry one night—had served a sentence of three months' imprisonment in Sydney for broaching cargo, and had been picked up in a low drinking-shop by Rawlings just after their release, and brought on board the *Mahina* without the knowledge of the shipping authorities. To Barry, who had had a long experience of deep-sea ships, this type of men was familiar—he knew their good points as well as their bad, and knew also how to manage them without resorting to either threats or force; consequently the four 'jail-birds,' as Rawlings persistently called them, had conceived a strong liking for the quiet-mannered yet determined chief-officer—a liking that was not confined to themselves alone, but was shared by the native crew as well.

A very brief inspection of the land in the vicinity of the little bay satisfied Barry that it would answer admirably for a station. All around were thousands upon thousands of coco-palms, and farther back were some hundreds

of huge jackfruit-trees—a species bearing bread-fruit of irregular shape, and containing large seeds. The brig could be moored within fifty yards of the beach, so deep was the water; and fresh water for the ship's use could easily be had, Velo assured him, by sinking in the rich soil among the breadfruit-grove.

Just as they emerged out into the open again and came in sight of the boat, one of the men in her called out to Velo that the three natives they had seen were women, and that one was dressed like a white woman!

'A white woman!' cried Barry; and, running down to the boat, he looked along the beach at the three advancing figures. One of them certainly was dressed in European clothing.

'That is very queer,' said Barry to Joe. 'Hullo! they've stopped.'

The women had ceased walking, and were now standing close together, evidently talking. Then the two brown-skinned, half-nude figures sat down on the sand, and the third came on alone towards the boat; she was walking slowly, and apparently with difficulty.

'Let us go and meet them,' said Barry.

Putting their rifles into the boat, he, Velo, and Joe at once started, and the moment the woman saw them coming she waved her hand to them; then toiling wearily up to the top of the beach, she sat down and leant her back against the bole of a coco-nut tree, but still continued to beckon with her hand.

'She's done up, sir,' cried Joe, as they broke into a run.

In less than ten minutes the three men were close up to her, Barry leading. Then she rose to her feet again, and with outstretched hands came to meet him; and Barry saw she was a young woman of about five-and-twenty, and that her features were undoubtedly European though tanned by a tropic sun.

'I am so tired,' she panted excitedly, as Barry took her hand; 'and I have hurt my foot running to meet you. I was afraid you'—

She ceased, and would have fallen had not Barry caught her. Then, overcome by excitement and physical pain, she began to sob.

Barry lifted her up in his arms and carried her back to the tree. 'There, sit down again, and don't try to talk,' he said kindly. 'Why, what is this? Your foot is covered with blood.'

Kneeling beside her, he lifted her bare left foot, and saw that the blood was welling from a fearful gaping cut right under the arch.

'I trod upon the edge of a *foli*,\* which was buried in the sand,' she managed to say, and then almost fainted with pain.

Hastily binding his handkerchief around the wounded foot to stay further loss of blood, Barry

\* A *foli* is a huge mussel, with an edge as keen as a razor.



again lifted her in his arms and carried her down to the boat, which had pulled up, and was now abreast of them.

'I must get your foot washed and bound up,' he said as he laid her down in the stern and made a pillow of his coat.

Unable to speak, from the intense pain she was enduring, the woman only moaned in reply, as Barry and Velo washed her foot with fresh water and cleansed the cut carefully, making sure by probing it with a pocket-knife that no piece of *fole* shell or stone was left in the wound. Satisfied that all was right, Barry bound up the foot again with Velo's cotton shirt, which he tore into strips.

The woman thanked him feebly; but as she again seemed inclined to faint, he gave her some strong brandy and water. This she drank eagerly, and then laid her head on the pillowed coat again; but quickly raised it when she heard Velo calling to her two companions, who, overcoming their fear, had now approached nearer to the boat, and presently came up, trembling in every limb.

'They want to know if she is dead, sir,' said Velo, who could understand a few words of what they said.

Barry made a kindly gesture to the strange, wild-looking creatures, who were young and handsome, to come and look. They did so, and the moment they saw their mistress they jumped into the boat and crouched beside her, patting her hands and smiling at her affectionately.

It was now nearly sunset, and time to decide upon quarters for the night; and as there was an abandoned native house within a few hundred yards of where the boat lay, it was at once taken possession of.

'I cannot take you on board the ship to-night,' said Barry to the woman, 'and I don't want you to talk too much when you are so weak; but tell me this—will there be any danger to my men and myself if we sleep on shore here in that old house?'

'None, sir; no danger whatever. There are but few natives on the island—all the rest were carried away by a Hawaiian labour-ship two months ago,' she replied faintly.

'Then we shall try and make you comfortable for to-night. We have plenty of sleeping-mats in the boat. Now I must lift you out again.'

By this time fires had been lit by the men, and supper was being prepared by Joe; the two native women and Velo had made a comfortable bed for the injured woman; a quantity of young coco-nuts husked by another sailor lay on the ground; and when Barry laid his charge down upon her bed of mats the scene was quite cheerful, as the blazing fires sent out streams of light across the waters of the sleeping lagoon.

'Now you must try to sit up and eat something and drink some coffee,' said Barry as he

placed some biscuit and meat and a tin mug of coffee beside the woman. 'There, lean your back against the water-breaker. Are you in much pain now?'

'Not so much, thank you;' and as she tried to smile, Barry could not but observe that she was a remarkably handsome woman, with clearly-cut, refined features. Her speech, too, showed that she was a person of education.

Barry seated himself near her and began to eat; the two wild-looking native women sat close by, munching the biscuits given them by Joe; and Joe himself and the rest of the crew were grouped together at the other end of the hut.

'Will you have some more coffee?' Barry asked presently.

'No, thank you; but I feel much better now. You have been very good to me.'

Seeing that she was much recovered, although her face was still drawn and pale, Barry began to question her.

'You are in great distress, and are not yet strong enough to talk very much; but will you tell me how you come to be living here, and how I can help you?'

She clasped her hands together tightly, and tried to speak calmly. 'My story is a very strange one indeed. I was landed here by an American whale-ship five months ago. She brought me from Ocean Island. I came here in the hope that my husband—if he is alive—would come here. But I fear he is dead—murdered;' and the tears began to steal down her cheeks.

'Murdered! Is he a trader in this group?'

'No; he was captain and owner of a trading-vessel—a small brig. I was with him. One night, when I was on deck, I overheard two of the officers and a man who was a passenger plotting to seize the ship and get rid of us both. They discovered me, and one of them threw me overboard to drown.'

'Good heavens! What was the ship's name?'

'The *Mahina*.'

Barry's heart thumped so violently that for a moment or two he could not speak; then he said hoarsely:

'My —! Who are you? What was your husband's name?'

'John Tracy! And you—who are you? Why do you look like that? Ah! you know something. Quick, tell me. Is he dead?'

There was a pause before Barry could bring himself to reply. The woman, with pale face and quivering lips waited for his answer.

'Yes; he is dead.'

Mrs Tracey bent her head and covered her face with her hands.

'I knew it,' she said, after one sob. 'I knew I should never see him again—that they would murder him as they tried to murder me. Will you tell me how you knew it?'

'I saw him lying dead in Sydney. I was told

that he shot himself in a fit of melancholy. He was lying on board the *Mahina*—and the *Mahina* is here at anchor in this lagoon. I am the chief-officer.'

'And the captain?'

'His name is Rawlings.'

'Ah! he is one of them; he was the passenger. Who are the other officers?'

'Barradas, a Spaniard, and a Greek.'

'Paul, the boatswain! He it was who threw me overboard. Now, tell me all you know about my husband. See, I am not crying. My grief is

done. I will live now to take vengeance on the cruel murderers.'

Barry was about to send his boat's crew out of hearing, but Mrs Tracey begged him not to do so.

'Let them stay. It can do no harm; and if they are men they will help me.'

'I think you are right, Mrs Tracey. Here is my hand and solemn promise to do all in my power to retake the *Mahina*, for now I begin to suspect that your husband did indeed meet with foul play.'

(To be continued.)

## THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

### FISHING HORSES.



IN the state of North Carolina, along the shores of the Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds, lie miles of low sandy banks, the greater part covered with little vegetation but coarse grass, wild parsley, and other salt-water weeds. Here come those who shoot the dainty canvas-back duck which frequents the little streams and salt-marshes with which this coast abounds, feeding upon the wild parsley and marsh grains. On some of these banks are a breed of small wild horses, known in the neighbourhood as 'banker ponies.' They are quite untamed and uncared for, with rough shaggy coats, and are generally about twice the size of a Shetland pony; now and again one even reaching the size of a small horse.

Each year the herd-owners drive them into pens, where the foals are branded with the owner's mark, and those required are caught and sold to the dealers who attend the annual penning. The poor things are frightfully wild and—to apply the dorky term for their state—'ignorant,' and have to be starved into eating grain and hay or grass, their whole subsistence up to this time having been the rank salt grass of the marshes, and fish. The latter they catch for themselves at low-tide, using their hoofs to dig deep holes in the sand below high-water mark; and they greedily devour the fish so left stranded, often fighting fiercely over an especially tempting one.

In captivity they show equal intelligence, though seldom a reliable temper. They are tamed by darkness and semi-starvation, and make excellent draught animals, showing strength far beyond their size. They also eat voraciously, consuming as much as a full-sized horse.

The foals bred from 'banker ponies' in captivity make valuable though small horses. They are strong, healthy, and intelligent, less vicious than their parents, and command good prices. One mare used for some years by the writer as a saddle-horse was sold for thirty pounds—a

good price in those parts; her sire and dam had cost respectively two and three pounds. She was a pretty little animal, could open any ordinary fastening with her teeth, and was frequently found with her head in the feed-bin. Once she was discovered in a cellar, protected by an outside door, lurching off her favourite diet, sweet-potatoes.

She always came to the whistle of her owner: a most necessary accomplishment, as she often escaped from her stable-yard through the carelessness of the dorky who tended her. On one occasion, when quietly walking through a busy street, her owner suddenly felt her nose nuzzling his hand for the customary sweet-potato, and they formed the centre of an admiring crowd till relieved by the breathless dorky-boy who had been vainly chasing her. He declared she had set out to seek her master, as her deviations from duty were usually confined to a neighbour's river-side field. From that a whistle would instantly fetch her, and when in search of her sweet-potato she would walk up the ten steps of the back piazza as easily as a child.

### THE TREATMENT OF SEWAGE.

Two most important reports by experts appointed by the sanitary authorities of London and Manchester have recently been issued; they refer to what is known as the bacteriological method of treating sewage. Those who have given no particular attention to the subject are under the impression that all bacteria are associated with disease, and must be regarded as the enemies of mankind; but a very cursory inquiry will show that many of these germs are of a beneficent character and work in various ways for our well-being. Indeed, without them existence would be impossible. These minute organisms are the chief agents in breaking up complex organic substances into such harmless products as water, carbonic acid gas, and nitrates, in the process commonly known as putrefaction or decay; and it has been found that in the case of sewage this separation-process can be brought about without difficulty by ob-

serving certain conditions in suitably constructed filter-beds or tanks. The advantage of the process may be summed up very briefly. No chemicals are required; there is no offensive sludge; all suspended matter is removed, together with most of the putrescible constituents of the sewage; and an effluent is produced so pure that it is not antagonistic to fish-life. We may also look forward with some confidence to the report of the Royal Commission which is at present engaged upon the subject, one of first-class importance to mankind at large.

#### MEDICAL ASPECTS OF THE WAR.

In the midst of much fault-finding on the part of irresponsible critics as to the general conduct of the campaign in South Africa, and as to the shortcomings of the War Office, it is pleasant to turn to the evidence of Sir William MacCormac, who, as every one knows, so nobly went to the front to aid the sick and wounded. He tells us that nothing that prevision could suggest or that money could purchase was wanting anywhere. In spite of the difficulties of transport, medicine, stores, and comforts were always on the spot when required, and in some of the battles the hospital-trains ran right into action. The wounds inflicted by the Mauser and by our bullets were very similar in character, and not nearly so severe as those of former wars. With regard to the mortality, generally as many as 95 per cent. of the cases in the base hospitals recovered, and a large proportion were able to return to duty at the front. Nearly all the hospitals were equipped with X-ray apparatus, and the Boers also use the Röntgen rays for detecting the position of bullets. The sanitary arrangements of the Boers were very defective; they were in the habit of digging graves in the midst of the camp, and offal of all kinds was allowed to pollute their trenches.

#### THE EVOLUTION OF THE ENVELOPE.

There are many persons now living who can remember the days when letters went through the post in the form of a folded sheet of paper sealed at one edge, for envelopes were not in common use until after the year 1855. About that time a machine was patented for producing these now indispensable covers for epistolary correspondence—a machine which, as compared with hand-labour, did the work of five girls. A better machine was produced in 1862, which performed the work of seven girls. Three years later came the Berlin & Jones machine, which had a device for gumming the flap of the envelope, and did the work of ten girls. Next came the Leader machine, another American device, which did the work of twenty girls, and is still largely used. This has a rival in the invention of Richards, whose machine gums, prints, folds, and counts the envelopes, and binds them with a paper band in packets of twenty-

five. This machine supplants the labour of thirty girls. In the United States last year the number of envelopes used amounted to six thousand million. We glean the above interesting facts from *Cassier's Magazine*.

#### LIFE IN SARAWAK.

At a recent meeting of the Anthropological Institute much interesting information was elicited during a discussion on native life and customs in Sarawak, and many photographs taken by members of the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition were shown. A village in Sarawak usually consists of a single house of immense size, which affords accommodation to all the inhabitants. The house is built on posts ten or fifteen feet high; it has a veranda along its entire length, 'in which is centred nearly all the social life of the community;' and from this veranda open out the private rooms devoted to each family. Cannibalism does not exist in Borneo; but strips of flesh are cut from the bodies of enemies, stored in bamboos, and used as an offering to the hawks from which the omens are taken. In certain cases of illness the patient would be persuaded to eat a small portion of human flesh as a curative agent; but this can hardly be regarded as cannibalism. In Dutch Borneo the people did at one time to a small extent eat human flesh; but the practice was stopped. For example, a male child might be very ill; and, as a last resource, it would be considered right to sacrifice a less valuable female life to save him. In such a case, if the boy had a sister, she would be killed, and a small piece of her flesh given to the patient to eat, under the impression that his life would thereby be preserved.

#### LIQUID FUEL.

The scare caused by the recent enormous increase in the price of coal, as well as by the wholesale exportation of Welsh coal, has once more turned serious attention to the adaptability of liquid fuel as a steam-raiser. If our railways have to pay 50 per cent. more for their coal than they have paid in the past, it will be to their interest to try liquid fuel if it can be shown that a steady supply of the material can be guaranteed at a cheap rate. The fitness of liquid fuel for steamships has already been demonstrated in the case of vessels trading in Eastern seas which are distant from the Welsh coalfields; and, according to *Fielden's Magazine*, the feasibility of Borneo oil competing with coal as a steam-raiser has become apparent to the Hamburg-American Company, who are fitting their steamer *Saxonia* with the necessary apparatus for burning liquid fuel, and contracts have been arranged for the fitting of six other steamers. The China Mutual Company have also stated, through their chairman, that in all future steamers built to their



order provision must be made for the use of liquid fuel.

#### A PARISH ALBUM.

It has been suggested by a writer in the *Graphic* that the opening of the twentieth century will afford a fit opportunity for the establishment in every parish in the kingdom of a book detailing all the more important events which occur in the district which it covers. The book would be illustrated by photographs of old buildings, historical trees, &c. which the encroaching claims of the builder had devoted to destruction; and portraits of the vicar, churchwardens, and prominent men in the neighbourhood would also appear in it. The idea is a good one; and, although it has been partly realised in some districts by the establishment of a photographic survey, and is met in a degree by the collection of photographs of notable places which has already been commenced at the British Museum under the auspices of Sir Benjamin Stone, there is a personal element in the suggestion which is more likely to keep it alive than in the case of the schemes referred to. It is, of course, a necessary condition that the photographs illustrating the proposed parish album must be of a permanent character.

#### THE DEADLINESS OF WARFARE.

Mr Hiram Maxim has recently pointed out that the deadly weapons now employed in warfare have had the effect of decreasing instead of increasing the actual casualties. As the range and efficiency of weapons are increased, the fighting area is increased in proportion, the size of the battlefields is quadrupled, while the casualties are proportionately diminished. In the old days one hundred thousand Persians fell before Alexander in a single fight, and Cæsar's wars cost more than two million lives. This awful slaughter was due to the use of primitive weapons, when men practically fought hand to hand. After gunpowder came in the 'butcher's bill' was still heavy, for the compound was of such poor quality that men were still killed at close quarters, and fought with spears, swords, and bayonets. In the present war the casualties are greatly reduced, and a large percentage of the wounded recover from their injuries.

#### THE WEAPONS OF THE FUTURE.

Mr Maxim foreshadows several novelties in the way of warlike appliances. One is the steam-driven machine which will run in advance of a body of troops, and drop charges of dynamite as it proceeds on its way. These charges will explode and form deep trenches ready for the accommodation of the men behind. Another suggestion is smoke-producing bombs to shut out an enemy's vision, so as to permit opposing troops to advance; and a variation of the proposal is

that such bombs should emit a suffocating odour so as to force a hasty retreat. Mr Maxim also describes an invention which he is perfecting, which takes the form of a battleship-destroyer, being a kind of torpedo-boat which will float either on the surface of water or below it. This boat would carry torpedoes for submarine work, and would also eject aerial projectiles carrying five hundred pounds of high explosive. The craft would be propelled at high speed by the use of turbine engines driven by the mixed steam and gas from a material similar to smokeless powder. He anticipates that an enormous amount of energy could be developed from such a source.

#### A MOUNTAINEER'S FOOT-GEAR.

In a recent lecture on the Bolivian Andes, Sir Martin Conway called attention to the great importance of suitable foot-gear in climbing high altitudes. The primary consideration is to clothe the feet in such a manner that they will be able to stand intense cold. He wore, to begin with, a pair of silk socks; then a pair of Shetland wool stockings; then a pair of goat-hair stockings from Norway, very hard and 'rubby,' but wonderfully warm; and, over all, a pair of boots made at Zermatt, with three thicknesses of leather over the foot, and very thick soles. For sleeping he had the ordinary reindeer-skin sleeping-bag of the Arctic regions—just the plain skin sewn together, unlined. He remarked that Arctic cold, say forty degrees below zero—which can easily be resisted at the sea-level—could not be endured by the strongest human being at a high altitude on account of the short supply of oxygen; and at the highest point of the Andes, where the temperature was about twenty degrees below zero, the cold was so intense that it was impossible to endure it without suitable foot-gear, which he regarded as the most essential part of the equipment for high-mountain climbing.

#### THE SCOTTISH SALMONIDÆ.

In a pamphlet which has recently been reprinted from the *Annals of Scottish Natural History*, Mr J. A. Harvie Brown urges a more thorough study of the variations among the British salmonidæ, and notes that many interesting varieties are to be found in Sutherlandshire. A curious instance of the manner in which change of locality may affect the appearance of fish is related. At Smoo, in the north of Scotland, in 1876, Mr Neil Campbell caught a few trout of ordinary character in a short reach of burn which flows from a cave into the sea, and put them in the stream above the cave. Four years later the author of the pamphlet caught some of these upstream trout, and found them beautifully marked with lines of crimson spots on the sides. These were the first fish killed there since their introduction in 1876, and he believes the extra-

ordinary superabundance of colour to be due to the release from the dark imprisonment of the cave-waters to free access to a sunlit stream. The author further describes variations in trout found in many other places, and urges upon anglers the duty of not merely killing fish, but making notes as to their appearance for the assistance of naturalists.

#### NAPHTHA-SPRINGS.

In the year 1895 a valuable naphtha-spring was discovered in the Ural Mountains, in the government of Uralsk, at a point about one hundred and thirty kilometres from the Caspian Sea; and this spring is about to be worked on a very extensive scale by a company. Besides naphtha there are found there, almost on the surface, very rich deposits of Glauber's salts, bitumen, and other valuable products. Analyses of samples of the naphtha yield 73 per cent. of the substances most valued in the naphtha industry, compared with 58 per cent. of the same substances found in Baku naphtha. It is believed by geologists that the naphtha does not form a subterranean reservoir as at Baku, but that it spreads out in ramified veins. It will, therefore, be necessary to fix the direction of these veins before any great yield of the naphtha is obtained. The construction of a petroleum tube from the spring to the Caspian Sea is already under consideration.

#### A NEW TOM TIDDLER'S GROUND.

At the extremity of Alaska, in United States territory, the discovery of gold is attracting an immense number of adventurers. According to all the reports, the goldfield here is of a unique character, for it is situated on the seashore and is washed by every tide. The sand and gravel are full of grains and nuggets, which can be picked up by any one, no expert knowledge or mining being necessary. The United States Government have decided that the goldfields, being a tidal-water ocean beach, cannot be appropriated. A man can possess himself between the tides of as much of the precious shingle as his spade, laid across it, will cover; but directly the water asserts its right to the place, the miner must, like Canute, retreat, and his place may be occupied by some one else the next tide. The place where these golden sands are situated is called Cape Nome; but it is not marked upon any of the standard maps which we have consulted.

#### THE DIVINING-ROD.

The alleged discovery of water and minerals by means of a twig or rod held between the fingers is a superstition of exceedingly ancient date, and one which is still credited even in many parts of our own enlightened country. Not long ago a water-discoverer who relied upon the divining-rod in prosecuting his work was actually employed by a corporation within the Metropolitan area; and there are many so-called water-seers who make a

living at the business. The whole question of the efficiency of divining-rods, exploring pendulums, hydrosopic compasses, and other fancifully named instruments is now to be inquired into by a Commission in France, of which the French engineer, M. de Rollière, is president. His address is, 'Care of Cosmos, 8 Rue François Premier, Paris;' and he will be glad of the loan of documents, instruments, &c. which may be of use to the Commission in their investigation. We trust that the labours of this Commission will once and for all settle the question of the divining-rod.

#### NEW HOUSE-LINING MATERIAL.

A new material for the use of builders has recently been introduced in Norway. It is a paper, or pasteboard, which with asphaltum is pressed into a solid plate, forming a very serviceable material for covering walls and ceilings. It is damp-proof and is a non-conductor of heat, so that it will keep a room warm and comfortable, while at the same time it deadens noise and prevents the harbouring of vermin. It is solid, but can be readily bent so as to conform to all the angles and projections of a wall without breaking or cracking. It is very suitable for panelling, and is even cheaper than the thin boards usually employed for this purpose. It is without odour, and will never decay. It is fair to state that a material with several of these advantages has long been known in this country under the name of Willesden paper. This, too, is waterproof, is made in several thicknesses, and can be treated with paint or other surface preparation without any difficulty. It takes its name from the place where the factory for its production is situated.

#### WHERE I WOULD SLEEP.

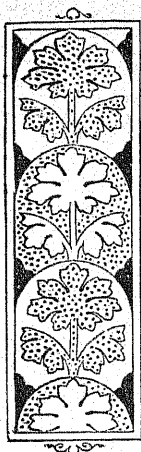
Not in a crowded City of the Dead,  
Set 'mid a living city's ceaseless roar,  
Would I lay down my tired heart and head  
When Life's perplexed, troubled dream is o'er;  
But I would choose a little grass-grown bed  
In some old kirkyard by a lonely shore,

Where, as I lay in Death's dear, dreamless sleep,  
Like an unwearied mother would the sea—  
The sleepless sea—her long watch o'er me keep;  
And, sweet as my dead mother's song to me,  
Soothing me into slumber, yet more deep,  
The waves eternal lullaby would be.

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

#### \* \* TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3rd. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### THE DEGRADATION OF KWANG.

By CARLTON DAWE.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.



THOUGH ostensibly a most excellent servant of the State, and one devoted to the interests of his imperial master, the 'Son of Heaven,' it was nevertheless suspected by Cheng-Li, and one or two of the more intimate advisers of the Emperor, that Kwang, the Viceroy of Shantung, was trying to serve two masters—or, rather, a master and a mistress. Kwang was a man of much learning and an administrator of high qualities; but though he had travelled extensively in Europe, and had seen the infinite blessings of Western civilisation, he still remained a reactionary of the most pronounced type, one who viewed with alarm the progressive tendencies of Cheng and a few other important officials. He was an old man steeped to the lips in an effete conservatism—a system with which one could hardly expect him to quarrel, since it had made him one of the richest of his master's subjects. Many blessings were expected from Kwang's visit to Europe; but it was undertaken at too late a period of his life: he had become too much imbued with tradition. Your Oriental possesses a splendid languor which makes him and his country an easy prey to the energetic foreigner. Were it not for the clashing interests of the white races, the black and the yellow would long since have forgotten the word 'independence.'

It was said that Kwang was one of the most powerful of the adherents of the Empress. It was well known that she viewed with inconceivable rancour all progressive tendencies; and in those days her views were worthy of the most serious consideration; for she was quietly but surely gripping the reins of power which were falling from the feeble hands of the Emperor. That she was a woman of intellect no one who knew her doubted. Skilled in intrigue was she, unscrupulous, daring: one who had the head to form a plan and the courage to carry it out. In

espousing her cause against the monarch, Kwang was not quite the fool he appeared to be.

Occasionally a stray rumour reached us from Shantung which reflected little credit on the government of Kwang. Now the people in the streets of Tsi-nan were insolent to foreigners, or now it was some trouble over a concession granted, from which the Viceroy had not pocketed as much 'squeeze' as he had confidently expected; but, whatever his misdemeanours, he was sufficiently privileged to escape punishment. An old servant of the State is not lightly to be cast off; and, after all, the 'squeeze' is recognised in high political circles. If a Viceroy cannot make his fortune in three or four years he earns the illustrious contempt of all right-thinking persons. All that is asked of him from Peking is that he shall see that the peace is kept.

No one knew better than Kwang how to repress the populace. His excellent rule had become a byword in official quarters. His memorials to the throne were models of art and literary elegance. There was no man in the whole of China who could pay a compliment with a more modest grace. He was the learned and gallant figure of officialism; one who had grown gray—and rich—in the service of the State; a model for the beginner, a source of exalted felicity to his own class.

Yet, as I have stated, the province of Shantung was acquiring a reputation for misgovernment which was likely to reflect little credit on those responsible for public order. Riots of a more or less serious nature had of late been much too frequent in and about the capital; and due representations had been made to the Tsung-li Yamen by the foreign Powers interested. As well try, however, to check the ruin of a falling house of cards as hope to make the Celestial profit by advice. The warning, no doubt, was duly pigeon-holed; it is even probable that the Viceroy had been warmly remonstrated with;



and there the matter ended. Something very serious would have to happen, and some serious pressure applied, before officialdom would stir. Threats are a vain thing; the Oriental moves only when you kick him.

Then one day, or rather one night, something serious did happen in Tsi-nan. Two foreign houses were sacked and burnt, and five Europeans were killed by the angry mob. At a preconcerted signal—so it seemed—the rabble, led by a certain mysterious individual of diminutive stature, came swarming up out of the alleys and byways, and attacked the two solitary houses. The burnings and the bloodshed that followed sent a thrill of horror through every white man and woman in the land; and, even in Peking, officialdom recognised that this was a very serious matter. Kwang, it is true, had made some mistakes, but never one so fatal as this. It so happened that the victims of this outrage were English, and, as a consequence, a severely worded protest was submitted to the consideration of the Tsung-li-Yamen. The Chinese were given to understand that the English Government insisted upon a severe punishment of those who had been guilty of this outrage, and it, moreover, demanded that the Viceroy Kwang should instantly be degraded from office.

The reply of the Tsung-li-Yamen was couched in the most apologetic and conciliatory tone. Justice should be done; those guilty of such an atrocious outrage on the laws of hospitality should suffer the extreme rigour of the law. There were plenty of promises—there always are where the Oriental is concerned—but there was precious little fulfilment. It is true that some half-dozen wretches were apprehended and summarily decapitated; but every one knew that the whole proceeding was a farce, and that the real culprits were enjoying the protection of those in high places. Kwang had not been degraded; and while the English did nothing but protest, there was little likelihood of such an event being consummated. The amiable old gentlemen who regulate the affairs of empire from the arm-chairs of Downing Street may be great theorists, but you want something more than theory as a reply to rapine and slaughter.

I believe it was the personal wish of the Emperor that Kwang should be relieved of his office; but there was a power behind the throne—a power against which the Emperor was powerless, and Kwang still sat in state in the Yamen at Tsi-nan. Then, with the execution of the alleged culprits, the English communications grew less strenuous, until at last they ceased altogether. The Chinese authorities had made some show of reparation, and the 'firm' despatches of England would read well in a subsequent Blue-Book. The world would see that the life of a British subject was sacred. Really, my Lord Mulberry, you are a heaven-born Minister; but don't you know that

one warship cleared for action, with a little moral courage behind it, would be enough to effect the degradation of every Viceroy or Governor throughout the whole eighteen provinces of the Celestial Empire?

With the closing of this unfortunate incident, out of which Kwang emerged with added laurels, the power of that excellent gentleman became solidified as it were, and people began to talk of him as the Great Viceroy, and predicted for him an eminence in the State which would loom large in the future; for it was well known that the powerful Empress was his friend, and with such a guardian there were no heights to which a man might not aspire. On the other hand, there were those who viewed with alarm the increasing influence of the great reactionary, and who, apart from the wish to dethrone a rival, saw in the power of such men as Kwang the real danger to their country.

Among these there was none more distressed at this state of things than my old friend Cheng-Li. Cheng and I had been good friends for many years, and the kindly hints he had dropped into his master's ears on my behalf had not been without their effect. I, on the other hand, had proved upon more than one occasion that his confidence had not been misplaced. One night he came to me, a look of intense gloom clouding his usually cheerful face. I brought out whisky and cigars—for Cheng had long since learned to appreciate the luxuries of civilisation—and otherwise added to the gloom of the occasion by chatting indifferently on indifferent subjects. At last, seeing that he was intensely preoccupied, I suggested that he was weary; for there is nothing that I detest more than the entertaining of a man who is in no mood for entertainment.

'Very weary, Clandon,' he replied, 'and not a little perturbed.'

'What is it that ruffles your illustrious serenity?'

'Ah, my friend, there is always something to ruffle one's serenity in these days. How thankful you must be that you are not Chinese!'

Candidly, I was; but I could not tell him so. Personally, I could not imagine a more horrible fate.

'Oh,' I said, 'one always invests in a foolish prejudice in favour of one's own country. But, my dear Cheng, I am sorry to hear of this perturbation. What has caused it?'

'We live in strange times, friend Clandon, and Heaven itself only knows what the next day is going to bring forth.'

'"A house divided against itself cannot stand,"' I quoted.

'True; and we are in the position of that house. I fear the climax which must come. Tell me'—and he lowered his voice almost to a whisper, lest the very walls should hear—'who is going to win—Emperor or Empress?'

I had never known him put the question so boldly, though I had long been aware of his trend of thought. The suggestion in itself was treason of the most heinous nature. Affairs were indeed assuming an alarming outlook when courtiers talked in this fashion.

'Victory will of course go to the stronger side.'

He smiled at my reticence. 'But which is the stronger side? Ah, my dear Clandon, after all you are but a looker-on, though sometimes even I forget that you are not one of us.'

'In England we say that the looker-on sees most of the game.'

'What sees your surprising wisdom?'

'Many things, O Cheng! which augur ill for many people, among whom I count more than one good friend.'

'Even so. The burden of empire falls heavily upon weak shoulders. Clandon, the Emperor is being openly set at defiance.'

'By whom?'

'The Woman!' he said harshly. 'Curious anomaly—is it not?—that in China, where woman suffers the degradation of being woman, a woman should rise to the supreme control.'

'But she has not yet risen to that dazzling eminence.'

'I am not so sure. It is a question even now who governs. I fear it will hardly be a question much longer.'

There was nothing new in this either. The Emperor, a poor, weak creature who meant well, was bound to succumb to the master-mind.

'Why not recognise the inevitable, and make terms with fate?'

'Being a courtier, I ought; but, being a man, I can't. Moreover, I am already "suspect." I do not think Her Majesty would welcome anything which concerned me, except, possibly, the news of my death. She knows that it is I who have supported the demand of England for the degradation of Kwang, that it is I who have paved the way of progress which the Emperor is inclined to tread, and that it is I who would willingly throw overboard all the tradition which hampers our advancement among the nations of the earth. This does not suit the book of Her Majesty and those who support her.'

'They are powerful?'

'So powerful, my dear Clandon, that they can thwart the will of the Son of Heaven. He had practically decided upon the degradation of Kwang, who is too powerful to be well loved. But influence has been brought to bear. The Emperor is a weak, vacillating creature, and Kwang is still the Viceroy of Shantung.'

'The cause?'

'Though it may easily be guessed, it is not for me to ask. However, this I do know, that His Majesty is hemmed in by traitors, and that, however much he may believe in Kwang's guilt,

and would like to punish him, he has not the power.'

'After all, it is just possible that Kwang may be innocent of any complicity in the outrage.'

'It is possible, but highly improbable. I know His Majesty would do much for the man who could prove conclusively the complicity of Kwang.'

These words he uttered slowly, and in a tone which was full of meaning. Quickly my eyes sought his. Cheng and I understood each other.

'Then you think that His Majesty would willingly degrade Kwang if a favourable opportunity presented itself?'

'Kwang, as I have said, is too powerful to be popular with the Emperor. Occasionally it happens that the subject outpaces the master. It is not a wise thing to do—especially here in China. Kwang is rich; the victims of this riot were "only foreigners," and the Emperor is a Manchu. Many causes, you see, why even an Emperor should hesitate.'

'But I understand this affair at Tsi-nan has been thoroughly sifted, and that the ringleaders have been executed?'

'Apparently. Certain men have been executed, among them being the alleged leader; but from the data to hand we learn that the individual who led the mob on that night was a diminutive, broad-shouldered person with a flowing white beard. No man answering to this description was executed at Tsi-nan.'

'The police have been set to work?'

'Yes; but you must understand that they are Kwang's police.'

'Precisely. And you would have me attempt'—

'I would have you attempt to discover the relationship between His Excellency the Viceroy and this diminutive leader of riots.'

'Um! Should Kwang not wish this diminutive person's identity discovered?'

'I need not hide from you the fact that I believe such to be the case.'

'Consequently there is danger in the mission?'

'Without doubt; but I have yet to learn that a little danger would frighten the Emperor's Watch-dog.'

'I can assure you, my dear Cheng, that the Emperor's Watch-dog is an inconceivably timid creature.'

He smiled, and really his smile was a greater compliment than his words.

'The protection of such a "timid creature" would ensure me infinite consolation. Clandon, I am not betraying the imperial confidence when I tell you that the Emperor would look with considerable approbation upon the man who could supply him with the motive for the removal of Kwang. Not alone does his influence exceed that of a mere subject, which from the imperial point of view is utterly intolerable; but he is

a reactionary of the most pronounced order, and consequently a great danger to the State. His Majesty is not ignorant of the friendship between Kwang and the Woman, and he already recognises that her path and his traverse diverse lines. With the proof in his hands of the Viceroy's complicity in this outrage, I think the Son of Heaven may be trusted to deal summarily with Kwang.'

'Times have changed,' I said.

Cheng looked very serious.

'Truly,' he answered, 'it is the old order giving way to the new, and it has at last reached us in our isolation. Fancy the Emperor of China having to find a reason for the dismissal of a servant! It is enough to make the old Mings rise in their graves.'

'We must take the times as we find them, friend Cheng. There are opportunities now, as in the old days, for the man of character.'

'Yes,' he muttered, 'the man of character;' and I knew that his thoughts reverted to the man of destiny—the poor, vacillating figure-head who was the ostensible ruler of four hundred millions of human beings.

Well, we talked the matter over for some considerable time, duly weighing the pros and the cons of the case; and it resulted in a half-hearted acceptance on my part of the mission proposed by Cheng. Not that I any longer felt the least scruple in thwarting the plans of the Empress or her creatures. Since I had acted as courier into Shansi for Her Imperial Majesty, I had something by which I could remember her exalted magnanimity. The Empress and I had still a little account to settle.

It would have been a real pleasure for me to cross this woman if I could only have depended upon receiving proper support; but the man behind me was but the shadow of an emperor. With proper guidance he might have shown some firmness in the regulating of affairs; he might even do so still if the opportunity came, or the right adviser appeared at his

elbow; but, situated as he was, there was little hope of aid or advancement. The result of one's work, if successful, would be received with consummate satisfaction; but if failure attended the effort, the imperial protection would be of the scantiest. That he would welcome the downfall of the Woman was extremely credible; but that he would sanction any act which might lead to that desirable result was not to be entertained for a moment. So was it even in this case of Kwang. Though ardently desiring the removal of that distinguished official, he had not the moral courage to sign the decree. As Cheng said, it was enough to make the members of the Ming dynasty turn in their graves.

Nevertheless, this adventure had a side which appealed distinctly to me, and one which carried more weight than the gratification of the Emperor. To remove Kwang from Shantung would mean the practical alienation of the whole province, a heavy blow to the prestige and power of the Empress. Pe-chi-li, I knew, was hers, and Shansi also, with Heaven only knows how many more provinces; but none was better than Shantung, or more rich in promise. Moreover, I had not forgotten my murdered compatriots. The English demands had ceased of late, and as a consequence the officials made mock of her power. I wanted badly to show these supercilious, slit-eyed yellow men that when England said a thing she meant it; that her strength was not all in words, though, God knows, she had been showing the world nothing but words for many and many a year.

There were many reasons, therefore, why I should endeavour to bring the great Viceroy to book; and once I had accepted the project as a remote possibility, it gradually grew in favour. Not that in my heart of hearts I believed any effort would save the situation. Nature herself seemed to have set her finger upon the decaying fragments of empire; and as the leaf withers and falls, so would fall this monstrous anomaly of a government.

## A CHAT ABOUT LIGHTSHIPS.



THERE is an enormous amount of interesting information to be gained during a holiday at the seaside; but, generally speaking, we take everything for granted in such an easy-going manner that we let slip the opportunity of gaining this information on the spot. It is only after returning to town that we wonder what such-and-such a thing was for, and feel annoyed that we did not ask a few questions.

Among the most interesting of these objects

are lightships, those red-coated sentinels of the sea which keep watch near the perilous sands and treacherous shoals on our coast. The floating lights are under the jurisdiction of the Trinity House; but as few people know what the Trinity House is, perhaps a few words as to the origin of this ancient corporation—which is of greater antiquity than the British navy, and, of course, than the standing army—would be of interest to the reader.

The Corporation of Trinity House received its first charter from King Henry VIII.; but it



existed long before that time as a Company of Shipmen (or sailors) for maintaining almshouses for old and destitute sailors, building and protecting sea-marks and fire-beacons for the guidance of mariners, and the supplying of pilots. The original title of the Trinity House is 'The Guild, Fraternity, or Brotherhood of the Most Glorious and Undivided Trinity and of St Clement, in the Parish of Deptford in the County of Kent.'

As shipping increased, so the responsibilities of the Trinity House increased, for to the Elder Brethren was entrusted the supervision of coast-lights, buoys, and beacons, besides many other duties for the benefit of the sailor. At present, however, we have only the lightships under consideration.

Roughly speaking, lightships are only used where it is impossible or inexpedient—on account of the shifting nature of the shoal—to build permanent lighthouses; and the first one to be placed in position was the well-known *Nore*, in the year 1732. At the present time there are sixty round the British coasts. The English lights are painted red and those on the Irish coast black, with the name in huge white letters on both sides. At the mast-head there is a large wooden globe or cage called the day-mark. The lantern encircling the mast is about ten feet high, and contains a number of argand lamps and reflectors, twenty-one inches in diameter, arranged in groups on a frame, which a beautifully regulated clockwork apparatus causes to revolve, and the result is those brilliant flashes of light which practically spell the name of the light-vessel to passing ships, for every light has some distinguishing characteristic, either in the period or colour of the flash.

Even when the lightship is rolling or pitching in a heavy sea the light remains horizontal, as the lamps and reflectors are hung on gimbals, so as to give them free-play in all directions.

Foggy weather entails additional work for all hands, as a powerful fog-horn, driven either by steam or compressed air, is kept working while the fog lasts. By means of high and low blasts from the trumpet, the sailor is informed what lightship he is passing, each fog-signal as well as each light having its own distinguishing characteristic.

When one on a summer holiday sees a floating light lying almost 'as idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean,' he is apt to think that a lightsman's life is also an idle one, and that there cannot be much real hard work attached to the calling. But to fully appreciate his responsibilities the landsman should go on board in mid-winter, when the nights are long, and when the fog hangs round the coast for days and sometimes weeks continuously. Being stationary, and generally lying right in the track of navigation, lightships are liable to the risk of being run down by passing vessels, especially during foggy

weather. But collisions are not confined to foggy weather only, for we read some time ago of the barque *Palawan* of Liverpool running into and sinking the *Kentish Knock* on a perfectly clear day. Three minutes after being struck the lightship foundered, the crew having barely time to save their lives by climbing on board the colliding vessel.

Unlike ordinary ships, which, if necessity arises, can generally run into harbour for safety, lightships must remain at their stations while the waves lash themselves into fury and break in a seething mass of foam upon the adjacent sands. To be able to do this, of course, very strong moorings are necessary; and strong they certainly are, for attached to a mushroom-anchor weighing two tons is a chain made of one and a half inch iron, which, before being used, is tested link by link to bear a tensile strain of twenty-three tons per square inch; while here and there a huge swivel is let in to prevent kinking when the vessel swings round at her moorings. From two hundred to three hundred fathoms of this enormous chain-cable are on board each lightship, and it is paid out or hauled in as the occasion demands.

The crew of a lightship consists of eleven men: the master, mate, three lamplighters, and six seamen; but only seven men are on board at the same time. The master and mate change places every month; but the others are relieved only once in two months. The Trinity House steam-vessels start with the relief crews on or about the fifteenth of each month, and on their return the men brought on shore are employed on the wharf chipping, cleaning, and painting buoys or in other similar work.

Of course it is essential that the lamps and apparatus should be kept scrupulously clean and ready for immediate use, and this work occupies much of a lightsman's time during the day; but there are also other duties to be performed. The officer, too, has to keep his log, a weather report, and the daily account of the expenditure of oil and other stores. In passing, it may be noted that about six hundred gallons of oil are consumed on board annually.

One of the crew is constantly on the lookout during the day for vessels running into danger. When a ship is sighted in this predicament a gun is fired to attract her attention, and two flags hoisted, which mean, 'You are standing into danger.' The firing is continued until the vessel alters her course and steers in a safe direction; but it occasionally happens that in spite of this warning the ship goes ashore and is wrecked. A few years ago the only way a lightship could render assistance in such an emergency was to fire guns and rockets to summon the lifeboat; but nowadays, thanks to the telephones fitted on board the more important lightships, the officer just 'rings up' the shore, and gives the exact

position of the vessel in distress, and in a short time tugs and lifeboats are on their way to assist the ship and crew. Before long, perhaps, even the telephone may be superseded by wireless telegraphy, as successful experiments have already been carried out between the East Goodwin Light and the South Foreland.

Life on board a lightship is necessarily very monotonous, the fact that the vessel is stationary having a very depressing effect upon some members of the crew. There are always plenty of good books on board to while away the watch below ;

but many of the men pass their spare time in modelling, boxmaking, wood-carving, and even bootmaking, and dispose of the articles during their month on shore. The Elder Brethren of the Trinity House do all in their power to make the men happy and contented with their lot. They receive good wages, and all the new hands have a prospect of promotion some day to the rank of master of a lightship ; they receive a free life insurance policy, a uniform, free medical attendance, and a good pension when they are too old for further service.

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

By JOHN OXENHAM.

### CHAPTER VII.—THE ARRIVAL OF THE DEVIL.



NEXT day, as I sat smoking on the bench of Vaurel's cottage after breakfast, I noticed at once a change in the look of the Château. It was no longer quite blind. Two of the brown wooden shutters upstairs were thrown back, and the windows were wide open. It gave the house a more cheerful look, and I took it as a sign of the revival of hope and interest in life on the part of its mistress.

'*Tiens !*' said Vaurel when he noticed it ; 'they are wakening up down there.'

We crossed in the punt, and fished down the other side of the river below the weir. As we progressed slowly past the house, with the width of the river and the grassy stretch beyond between us and it, we saw the old priest and mademoiselle slowly pacing the terrace, the old man talking earnestly, mademoiselle listening, it seemed to me, perforce, and with the manner of one who would have preferred being left alone.

The priest caught sight of us, and stopped to look, and possibly to ask his companion who we were. They were still pacing so, the priest turning sideways to her in his argumentation, and mademoiselle a little in front as though impatient of his importunity, when we passed out of sight round the bend. I could hear Vaurel growling curses on the 'crow' as long as he could see him. He said nothing to me ; but he was not fortunate in his fishing, and presently I almost fell over him where he lay in the grass, having thrown aside his rod in disgust.

'It does not go to-day,' he growled ; 'the sight of Old Crow yonder pecking away at mademoiselle has upset my humour. God made men and women, but the devil made the priests.'

'Tut ! you are feeling bad, my friend. One would think you had suffered from their peckings yourself.'

'That I would not mind. But mademoiselle !

it is different. She is all alone, and with no one to help her. Oh ! he will gobble her whole—lands and money and all. A big belly and a wide-open mouth has the Church, and an appetite that grows on feeding.'

I also dropped my rod and sat down in the grass, then filled my pipe and handed him my pouch.

'See here, Vaurel, my friend, let us talk. Tell me all you can about Gaston des Comptes. Can you see any daylight through the matter yourself ?'

'*Sapristi !* I did not know you knew anything about the matter,' he said in surprise.

'Of course I know about it. Why should I not know what all the world knows ?'

He was evidently much puzzled at my sudden accession of knowledge, and filled his pipe between his knees ruminatingly, glancing doubtfully up at me now and again from under his brows.

'You do not believe he has done this thing ?' I said.

'*Mon dieu !* No !' he said, with sudden heat, for which I liked him all the more.

'Very well, then. We are of the same opinion, that mademoiselle's brother is the victim of—shall we say some terrible blunder ?'

'Or worse,' he growled. 'I tell you, monsieur, if the men at headquarters are no better than the men who fooled us in the war they're a rotten lot—ay, putrid ! I've no doubt the country has been sold—is sold every day of its life ; but no Des Comptes ever sold his honour. Why should he ? For money ? Not likely ! He always had all the money he wanted.'

'And you think ?'—

'I don't know what to think. You see, I know nothing of the men he was among. But I know him—have known him ever since he was a baby—and I say he did not do this thing ; and if I could find the man who has made the

world believe he did—*gr-r-r-r-r!*—I would wring his rascally head off.

'The clue, then, can only be found in Paris?'

'I suppose so.'

'And you don't know the circumstances of the case?'

'I know practically nothing, except that Gaston des Comptes never did a dishonourable thing in his life.'

Beyond this rooted belief in the integrity of the house of Des Comptes, Vaurel had practically no knowledge of actual facts, and no amount of discussion availed to produce any further light on the case. He knew just what all the world knew, that, after a trial *in camera*, Gaston des Comptes had been condemned for treason; but of the grounds and proofs of the accusation the world knew nothing.

It was the day following this that Vaurel came down the path through the woods in a state of great excitement, with Boulot at his heels. He dropped on to the bench where I was sitting contemplatively watching the Château through my smoke, and burst out:

'Monsieur, I have just seen the devil!'

'Oh!'

'Yes, *dame!* He came in by the morning train.'

'Oh!' said I again.

'You remember my telling you of Captain Lepard?'

'Let me see—which was he? You have told me so many interesting stories, my friend.'

'He was the one who was shot from behind at Wörth.'

'I remember.'

'Well, he is here. He is colonel now, I see.'

'The shooting was not very effectual evidently.'

'As I told you, monsieur.'

'And so he's come after you at last.'

'No, monsieur; when I shoot a man I shoot him in front—unless he is a Prussian, of course.'

'And what do you suppose brings this gentleman here, and how does he affect you?'

'He has gone to the Château.'

'The dickens he has!'

'Exactly! That's it! That is what I said, monsieur.'

'What does he want at the Château?'

'No good, whatever it is,' said Vaurel, with conviction. 'The man is brave enough when it comes to fighting; but he's a bad man, and of an evil temper, and he was hated by his men. I have seen him more than once strike a man across the face with his cane at drill, and a man never forgets that kind of thing, monsieur. And as for the women—well! he had a reputation.'

'What is he doing here, I wonder?' I said gloomily.

'Maybe he is on Monsieur Gaston's business.'

'That is possible.'

'If he is mixed up in it, good-bye to Monsieur

Gaston. And if it gives him any hold on mademoiselle the good God help her.'

'Why should it give him any hold on mademoiselle?'

'I cannot say; but if it does he is the man to make the most of it.'

The arrival of this man, upon whom I had never set eyes, and of whom I had never heard except from Vaurel, and his presence at the Château, caused me quite unaccountable discomfort. There might be a dozen good reasons for his being there; but the simple fact that he was there was sufficient to make me hate him. I took myself to task for feeling so, and hated him all the more.

I saw him walking with mademoiselle on the terrace more than once; but he seemed to keep to the grounds of the Château; and though I rambled about the village and along the road to the Château gates, I never got a nearer sight of him.

And now I was surprised by another most unexpected arrival, which strengthened tenfold all my determination to see the matter through, and to be at hand in case mademoiselle should find herself able to avail herself of any assistance I could offer her.

As Vaurel and I turned into the little inn one evening after a long day's fishing down the river towards Bessancy, we found a stranger at table and already half-way through his dinner.

He replied to our 'Good-day,' and then, with a laugh which was certainly not one of pleased surprise, cried, '*Diable!* it is the Englishman again. How goes it, monsieur?'

'*Holla, Monsieur Roussel!*' I exclaimed; 'it is quite an unexpected pleasure to meet you once more.'

From the grin with which he greeted this I have no doubt he judged fairly accurately the amount of pleasure I felt at sight of him.

'Monsieur is stopping in the neighbourhood?' he asked.

'Yes; I am here for the fishing;' and I held up my string of trout.

'You have been fortunate,' he said. 'It is a pretty stream. I have come for some painting.'

'Ah! I thought you went in mostly for portraits?'

'On occasion,' he laughed. 'But it is not good to confine one's self to one line. I try my hand at historical subjects now and again'—and he grinned reminiscently—'and it is good also to come to Nature herself at times.'

Jeanne supplied us with our soup, and we fell to with keen appetites.

'I am delighted to find you here,' he said presently. 'Your French is not the most fluent, monsieur; but it is at all events understandable, whereas the language of the natives hereabouts is of the most barbarous.' And Vaurel scowled at him from under his brows.



I was thinking that from this man I could probably learn the actual facts of young Des Comptes's trouble, and I promised myself to cultivate him with that end in view. I was wondering, also, how soon he would broach the subject of mademoiselle, for that she was the object of his visit I had not, of course, a moment's doubt.

He made no reference to her, however, but chatted away on matters Parisian in a way that drew a reluctant interest even from Vaurel, who had been inclined to treat him with the brusque indifference, amounting almost to rudeness, with which the man of the soil cloaks his native shyness in the presence of a stranger to whom he owes no allegiance, and whose assumption of superiority—and even his presence—he sometimes resents.

Roussel retailed for our benefit all the latest doings of the various worlds of Paris; and when he had got down below the half-world and well on to the quarter, Mère Thibaud, contrary to her custom, packed Jeanne off to bed and settled herself in her corner, with a piece of knitting, to enjoy the talk of the stranger. Jeanne, before she went, came over to me and whispered that she hoped I would not mind the gentleman having to share my room; and, though I did not much relish the prospect, I could but nod acquiescence.

Roussel did most of the talking, and Mère Thibaud and Vaurel did most of the listening. For myself, his scandalous rattle had absolutely no interest and still less attraction. It was probably his perception of this that made him turn to me at last and ask:

'And Mdlle. X., monsieur—have you succeeded in making her acquaintance yet?' and at the word it seemed to me that Vaurel pricked up his ears and became suddenly alert.

'I have not, M. Roussel.'

'Ah! you do not turn your opportunities to account.'

'Perhaps so.'

'She is here at the Château—is she not?'

'I believe so.'

'And M. l'Abbé Dieufoy is there also to take care of her—is it not so?'

'M. l'Abbé is there also.'

'And Madame the Mother Superior of the Convent of the Sacred Heart at Combours came down in the same train as myself, and has also gone to the Château. Mademoiselle is to be well guarded. You are evidently looked upon with suspicion, monsieur.'

'And M. le Colonel Lepard is also at the Château,' said Vaurel.

'Lepard!' cried Roussel, his face blackening at the news.

'What does he want there, monsieur?' asked Vaurel.

'Want? What should he want but what they

all want—mademoiselle, or at all events mademoiselle's fortune. Lepard!' he said again after a pause. 'Heavens! When did he come?'

'Three days ago.'

'And mademoiselle has been living in the same house with Colonel Lepard for three days! She won't have a rag of reputation left.'

'It is her own house, and the priest is there,' I said curtly.

'Oh—the priest!' he said hotly. 'The priest wants the money. Lepard wants both the money and mademoiselle, or as much of them as he can get. Between them they are quite capable of making a bargain to divide the spoils.'

Vaurel was wriggling uncomfortably in his chair. Roussel's hidden meanings, more than his words, awoke in me the usual strong inclination to punch his head.

'He has got an evil reputation, this Colonel Lepard, you must know,' he said, swinging back his chair on to its hind-legs and lighting another cigarette. 'It was his unpleasant attentions to mademoiselle which got him and young Gaston to loggerheads. Lepard is on the General Staff'—

'Rotten as punk,' interjected Vaurel.

'Ay, rotten as punk,' continued Roussel, 'and it was the General Staff that accused Des Comptes and condemned him. I would bet a thousand to one Colonel Lepard had his finger in that pie. First he gobbles the brother in order to clear the way to the sister; and now he is here to gobble the sister—unless'— He added, with an unpleasant laugh, some expressions which were quite beyond my limited knowledge of the language.

At that Vaurel, whose anger had been steadily rising with every reference to the family, swept round his brawny arm, and Roussel rolled over on the floor, chair and all.

'Thousand demons! What is it, you crazy buffoon?' gasped the artist, spitting out bits of the cigarette which the fall had driven down his throat.

Vaurel stood over him swinging his chair in his big hand. 'You dirty dog!' he said hotly, 'speak another word of mademoiselle and I'll knock your ugly brains out.'

'Who's saying anything against your mademoiselle?' said Roussel.

'You were, pig. You meant that mademoiselle was no better than she should be. If you open your mouth again I'll ram this chair-leg down your throat.'

He stood over him for a couple of minutes; but Roussel showed no intention of offering an opening for the chair-leg; and at last Vaurel banged down his chair and sat on it with his back to the enemy.

'Things like that should not be allowed to live,' he growled to me; 'they are only fit to be squashed under an honest man's boot.'

At the first sign of trouble Mère Thibaud had

discreetly betaken herself to her bedroom, so we were alone.

Roussel, with venomous glances at Vaurel, gathered himself gingerly into a sitting posture, then lighted another cigarette and sat smoking it. Conversation was impossible after this little outbreak, and presently Vaurel rose and bade me good-night without another look at Roussel.

As soon as he was gone the other got up, and, to my surprise, said quietly, 'He was right, and I was wrong. Those things should not have been said. All the same, monsieur, it is dangerous

to the reputation of mademoiselle for this Colonel Lepard to be at the Château.'

The mildness of his tone, where I expected an outburst of anger, astonished me greatly. I looked curiously at him; but his eyes were fixed gloomily on the fire, and it was probably only the reflection of the smouldering logs that gleamed in them. All the same, I made up my mind to warn friend Vaurel to be on his guard, for, from the little I knew of Roussel, I believed him capable of repaying that hasty blow with compound interest.

## A RUN TO CRÉCY.



CRÉCY, where, in 1346, our bowmen, with the sun at their backs, made such an example of the French with the sun in their eyes, is an interesting little village easy to reach from the main north line between Boulogne and Paris. The average Englishman going south from the Channel may be excused for not leaving the train at Abbeville and making for the fields of beetroot and heavy-headed oats which surround the red-bricked little town some twenty kilometres to the north. He reflects perhaps that even a patriotic thrill may be dearly purchased at the cost of a night in a poor yet populous bed, the excitements of which are preceded by such dismal fare as a remote little place like Crécy may offer him under the great name of dinner; but of course the cyclist can afford to scorn such fears. Crécy is twenty kilometres from Hesdin in the north as well as from Abbeville in the south. There are good hotels in both places, and what are twenty kilometres on French roads?

However, this is a personal narrative, and I confess I slept at Crécy, and took my chance. Leaving Abbeville rather late in the afternoon of a stormy September day, I was soon fighting the wind on the higher land outside the town. Blue-bloused peasants were cutting the oats and binding them as fast as possible on both sides of the hedgeless road, which was none of the best, though it would have been tolerable enough if the wind had kindly dropped or gone to the right-about. The local ladies wear their skirts short, and the small girls make themselves picturesque, though eccentric, with white tight-fitting skull-caps. It seemed to me that I understood those features in them: the lusty wind from the Channel could get scant purchase on them when thus clad.

By-and-by there was a hurricane, so that it was futile to attempt to ride against it. Twigs of trees from afar came whistling across the road like the bolts from our bowmen against the French in A.D. 1346; and the merry sons and daughters of toil in the fields had to clutch their sheaves,

or it seemed so, to keep them from enriching the harvest of the next farmer. In fact, at the hamlet of Marcheville, which may be twelve kilometres from Abbeville, I was so worried by the gale that I rested by a wayside cross. A little maid, blown before the wind, lisped her 'Monsieur!' of salutation in the gracious local way as she volleyed past me; but she could by no means stop to tell me which of the roads at this junction went towards Crécy. Happily, a gendarme of portly build, with a face like an intellectual beetroot, followed the little maid, and could stop. He gave me the necessary information, and then became genially sarcastic.

'Monsieur wishes no doubt to see where the battle was. The English have good memories as touching that small affair,' he said.

Quite casually I hinted that after Crécy I hoped to ride to Agincourt. Thereupon the good gendarme spread his palms and shrugged.

'I cannot wait,' he said, with a laugh. 'Who knows? Monsieur may mention Waterloo next. But, nevertheless, we French have won battles as well as lost them.'

Nor did he wait, or else I should have endeavoured to explain to him that it is just because his forefathers were such valiant battle-winners that we English are so proud of looking upon the French landscapes which anciently we decorated with our flags of victory. Perhaps, too, had he been patient, I should have given him the opinion of experts about this same fight of Crécy. There were brave men on both sides; but our advantage of position was immense. We were on the heights (though there is nothing at Crécy worthy of the name of hill), and the French chose to march at us up a greasy slope, which made them 'skid' badly. Further, there was the confusing sun in their eyes. When our arrows joined issue against them with the sun and the slippery clay, and crashed upon their eyes 'so thick that it seemed snow,' our Black Prince had as good as won the day. I am sure the gendarme would have appreciated these remarks, even if they were not very new to him; but he

went his way instead, and the hurricane in the small of his broad back prevented him shrugging his shoulders, as I doubt not he would have continued to do for five minutes after our separation.

The rest of the road to Cr  cy was across what might be termed very gradually rolling uplands. The air, barring the force of it, was splendid : tonic as the champagne I had drunk the previous day in Messrs Pommery's cellars at Rheims. But it did not agree with the cycle's constitution until we had turned the top of the higher lands to the south, and could descend into the hollow of the battlefield—a broad, bare trench going north-west and south-east, on this day purpled with beetroot.

Cr  cy was welcome, and so was I, if the landlady of the Golden Cannon Inn could be believed. The town is a snug little place, by no means greatly different from certain of our Kentish towns. This must be said, though : that no self-respecting Kentish man would set the word 'bookseller' above his shop and then point to wall-papers, bottles of ink, school copy-books, and manuals of French history, and exclaim, 'I have no books but these !' Further, the Kentish landlord who put his patrons on such a cut-throat beverage as the cider of the Cr  cy inn would very soon become notorious and poor ; and further still, one does not see many such fine clusters of black grapes to the fa  ades of Kentish houses as were here decorating most admirably the mellow red bricks of the Cr  cy fronts.

It rained and it blew hard that night, so that I missed the pleasure of a moonlight ramble about the battlefield. A very courteous young Frenchman who boarded for his sins at the 'Golden Cannon' had volunteered to explain all the landscape to me. 'We have good hearts, we Frenchmen,' he said, 'and we do not disguise from ourselves that we were beaten in 1346.' I sat next to him at the *table d'h  te* dinner, which was quite the most melancholy festival of the kind I have ever enjoyed in France. The soup was of cabbage and the beefsteaks were of horse. Lest I seem to libel the poor little inn's beefsteaks, I hasten to add that the three town officials and others who sat down with long faces and impatient waistcoats to this sad repast all agreed that they were 'cheval.' Our beverage, as I have said, was the most rasping cider in the world. When all was over we rose as one man with such emotions as might be conceived to be in the mind of a scheming bridegroom who has just wedded extreme ugliness and discovered that the money belongs to the pretty sister after all. The landlady's reputation as a manageress was not, I am sure, undeserved. No one but a Frenchwoman could constrain men to sit at her table day after day to such banquets.

I was up at half-past six the next morning to greet the sunshine that had followed the rain. Madame the landlady was also up at that useful hour. With her own hands she brought me hot

milk and coffee in large bowls ; and while I partook of these and rolls in combination, she prattled of the quiet pleasures of life in Cr  cy. 'We do not possess the excitements of Paris, I agree,' she said ; 'but what would you have ? It is better to breathe a pure air and eat homely food.' Honest, thrifty soul ! I paid my bill and went forth to see the town and the battlefield, and to finish my run to Hesdin ere the rain continued its attentions.

The old church and an old market-cross in the square near it are both worth inspection. The red bricks of the church walls were as mellow and bright with lichen as the houses of the town ; and the chestnut-trees by its porch yield a shade which the Cr  cy gossips no doubt relish in the dog-days. Inside, it has not very much to engross ; one expects such great things from French churches that its deficiencies seem more considerable than they are. But on this bright September morning the interior was made lustrous by the presence of a number of nuns in spotless white, solemnly receiving the sacrament. A somewhat profane common person in a clean blue smock took snuff as he contemplated the scene, and remarked to me, 'That makes a pretty picture, *ma foi* !' It was even more than that.

Of the battlefield one sees without difficulty everything that remains to be seen. The old mill by which our Edward the Third stayed with his reserves while the Black Prince won the day and his spurs, has been removed only within the last twelve years. It is a pity it had to go ; but one may sympathise also with the French proprietor of it : he must have got rather weary of seeing exultant Britons standing at its base and looking at the wheat-fields and acres of beetroot below with pride in their hearts. But the site, of course, is not so readily removable ; and any one may from this capital vantage-ground understand with what precision the English king could follow the details of the combat which ended in the wreck of the hopes of his brother of France.

The eight trees and the cross are the most conspicuous objects remaining on the battlefield, where, as the old rhymers says, the 'Franche men put tham to pine.' Why they are coupled together one does not know. The trees are by no means old like the cross, and can have had no concern in the battle. But I was told twice that it behoved me to see the trees, and so I looked at them ; and very unhappy they were in the renewal of the gale which set in at about seven o'clock. They bent and groaned towards the old cross, which, according to the very credible legend, marks the spot where the blind king of Bohemia was found dead after the battle. There is no inscription on the cross ; and when this cross is completely worn away by the winds and the rains, one may doubt if France will take the trouble to give it a successor.

From the battlefield we rode forward along the



hedgeless road, and soon left the little town hidden in its somewhat humid hollow. The village of Wadicourt is passed at two kilometres distance, nor tempts to a pause, though it is pretty enough with its vine-clad cots and bowers of honeysuckle and clematis round about a church with a slated spire. The plough, the scythe, and the flail are all at work here simultaneously. Cows are lowing in the deep grass, and larks singing above the cows. A row of eleven men and women making their breakfast by the roadside respond to the greeting of '*Bon appétit!*' with a chorus of '*Salut!*' The little children trotting to school lift their eyes and whisper '*Monsieur!*' One of them has tarried behind his comrades to put some fresh-plucked wheat on a wayside shrine of red brick to Our Lady of the Fields, beneath whose effigy are words entreating her protection; and the pure, good wind whistles from the west, and roars in the little patches of woodland close at hand.

A much more winsome village is that of Dompierre, in a glen with the pellucid Authie flowing through it. It possesses an aged church of the same period as Crécy's, and a castellated mill, which no artist could pass without sketching. There is a humble inn here, with the significant sign of 'The Sun Shines for all the World.' One can guess at the placid, contented souls of the

villagers who come to this inn to take their morning and evening cider and discuss the Dompierre events. Had they been less easy-going, perhaps there would have been fewer flints on the road. But as they do not cycle much in this part of Picardy, the crime could well be pardoned.

Rapechy and Dompierre adjoin, and are equally suggestive of tranquillity. Beyond them both there was little to halt for until Hesdin came in view from a ridge. Little; yet something. A certain shrine of St Hubert on a knoll of forest, and with gaunt hawthorns surrounding it, cannot fail to interest the Englishman unused to such things. There are rude effigies of St Hubert, the stag, a dog, a horse, and a tree with a bird in it, all so very rude that a child might have moulded them and painted them according to his fancy. But they are all eminently picturesque, considering where they are.

This may be said, too, of the snug Hôtel de France of Hesdin and its admirable old garden, in which my run from Abbeville *viâ* Crécy terminated: the military do not disdain to take their meals in this hotel; and where they establish the lead no ordinary civilian need fear to follow. It was not necessary here to consume cabbage-soup, '*cheval*,' and rough cider in default of nothing.

## ARRECIFOS.

By LOUIS BECKE.

CHAPTER VI.—MRS TRACEY TELLS HER STRANGE STORY.



MRS TRACEY listened with the most intense interest to Barry's account of his first meeting with Captain Rawlings; of the strange, mysterious midnight sailing of the *Mahina* from Sydney Harbour; and of the story of her husband's suicide, as related by the captain to his newly-engaged chief-mate on the following day, when he came on deck and said that Tracey was dead.

'It may be that my poor husband did indeed take his own life,' she said; 'but I do not believe it.'

'Yet why should they—Rawlings and the others—have spared him so long?' inquired Barry.

'Neither Barradas nor Rawlings was a navigator,' replied Mrs Tracey quickly.

'Ah! I see,' and the chief-officer stroked his beard thoughtfully; 'but yet, you see, Rawlings would have sailed without a navigator on board had he not met me on the wharf that night.'

'Perhaps so; yet I do not think it. He has the cunning of Satan himself.'

'Indeed he has, ma'am,' broke in Joe.—'Why, sir,' turning to Barry, 'the night we sailed he

drugged the Custom-House officer, and flung him into the dinghy. Then, when you was for'ard heavin' up anchor, the Greek and two of the native chaps took him ashore, and chucked him down on the wharf.'

'The scoundrel!' exclaimed Barry, thinking of the letter he had written to Rose Maynard that night. 'But how do you know this?'

'I been tell Joe jus' now,' said one of the native seamen. 'De captain gave me an' Billy Onotoa ten shilling to take that man ashore with the bos'un. An' he say if we tell any one he kill us by-an'-by.'

'The ruffian!' muttered Barry.

'Now that you have told me your own story, Mr Barry,' said Mrs Tracey excitedly, 'let me tell you mine from the beginning, and show you how this heartless wretch has imposed upon you from the first. The tale he has given you is a tissue of lies, interwoven with a thread of truth.'

'I can well believe it. Many things which have hitherto puzzled me seem now to be clear enough.'

'Nearly two years ago,' began Mrs Tracey, 'my husband owned and sailed a small cutter of thirty tons, trading among the Marshall and Caroline

Islands. His headquarters were at Jaluit, in the Marshall Islands, where he had a store, and where I lived whilst he was away on his cruises. During the seven years we spent among these islands I would often accompany him, for it was very lonely on Jaluit—only natives to talk to—and he would sometimes be away many months at a time.

'On our last voyage in the cutter we called in at Port L  le on Strong's Island. Old Gurden, the trader there, and my husband had had business dealings with each other for many years. He was a good-hearted but very intemperate man, and several times we had taken him away with us in the cutter when he was in a deplorable condition from the effects of drink, and nursed him back to health and reason again. On this occasion we were pleased to find him well, though rather despondent, for he had, he said, an idea that his last carouse had "done for" him, and that he would not live much longer.

'That evening the old man told us the story of his life. It was truly a strange and chequered one. When quite a young man he had been flogged, and then deserted from H.M.S. *Blossom*—Captain Beechy—in 1825, and ever since then had remained in the South Seas, living sometimes the idle and dissolute life of the beach-comber, sometimes that of the industrious and adventurous trader. My husband was interested, for he liked the old fellow, who, in spite of his drunken habits, had many excellent qualities. For myself he always professed the greatest regard, and that evening he proved it.

'After he had finished his story he turned to my husband and said, "You and your wife have always been true friends to drunken old Jack Gurden. Now, tell me, did you ever know me to tell a lie except when I wanted to get a drink and hadn't any excuse?" We both laughed, and said we knew he was a truthful man. "Did you ever hear me talking about a lagoon full of pearl-shell when I was mad with drink?" he inquired. We laughed again, and said that he had done so very often. "Ah!" he said, "but it is true; there is such a place; and, now that my time is coming near, I'll tell you where it is. You, Mrs Tracey, who have nursed the old drunken blackguard beach-comber, and asked him to seek strength from God to keep off the cursed grog, will be one of the richest women in the world. I wrote it all down four or five months ago, in case when you came back here you found I was dead."

'Thereupon he handed my husband a number of sheets of paper, on one of which was drawn a rough plan of Arrecifos Island, or, as he called it, Ujilong. The rest contained clear and perfectly written details of the position of the pearl-shell beds.'

Barry nodded. 'He had lived there, I suppose?'

'For quite a number of years—from 1840 to

1846. He married one of the native women there. At that time over two hundred natives lived on these thirteen islands, and Gurden said he could quite understand why the richness of the pearl-beds was never discovered by white men, for no ship had ever entered the lagoon within the memory of any living native of the place, and not once in ten years had the people even seen a passing ship send a boat ashore.'

That this was true Barry knew, for he had often heard trading captains speak of Arrecifos and Eniwetok as great chains of palm-clad islets, enclosing lagoons through which there was no passage for ships.

'The natives themselves had no idea of the value to white men of the beds of pearl-shell; and, as a matter of fact, Gurden himself at that time did not think them of much value. Later on, after he left the island and visited China, he spoke to several merchants and traders there, and tried to induce them to send him back to the lagoon with a crew of divers; but, as he was usually drunk when he called on them, no one would listen to him. His story was merely regarded as the fiction of a drunken sailor.

'My husband did not so regard it. He had never been to Arrecifos, but knew something of it by its name of Ujilong—the group takes its name from the island off which you are anchored—as a place of very few inhabitants, who lived on a number of low islands covered with coco-nuts.

"Let us go there, and you can pilot me in," he said to Gurden. The old man agreed with alacrity. Taking him on board, we sailed the following morning, and reached this place five days later. He took us in safety through the south-east passage; and the moment we landed he was recognised and welcomed by the people as one returned from the dead.

'We remained in the lagoon for three months, and during that time Gurden and my husband, aided by the willing natives, obtained ten tons of magnificent shell, and more than a thousand pounds' worth of pearls. Those which Rawlings showed you were some belonging to us; I suppose he found them in my husband's cabin after murdering him. They had often been shown to both Rawlings and Barradas on board the *Mahina*, for my husband was, as I will show you later on, the most unsuspecting and confiding of men.

'Convinced that there were indeed at least some hundreds of thousands of pounds' worth of pearl-shell to be easily obtained, if he could secure experienced native divers from the equatorial islands—for these people here are not good divers—my husband decided to go to Honolulu, sell the cutter and the pearl-shell we had obtained, and then with the money he had on hand, which amounted to about eleven hundred pounds, buy a larger vessel, secure a number of good divers, and return to the lagoon, on one of

the islands of which he intended to make his home for perhaps many years. Arrecifos, he knew, did not belong to any nation; and both he and old Gurden thought that the British Consul at Honolulu would give us what is, I think, called a "letter of protection," whereby a British subject hoisting the British flag upon any of the Pacific islands can, with the approval of a naval officer and the concurrence of the native inhabitants, purchase it, and get protection from the British Government.

'He wished Gurden to remain until we returned. The old man, however, said it would be too lonely for him, but that if we took him back to Strong's Island he would be content to await our return there. The long voyage to Honolulu, he thought, would be too much for him; and, besides that, he wished to return to Strong's Island, if only to say farewell to its people, with whom he had lived for so many years. After that he would be content to end his days with us on Arrecifos.

'Returning to Strong's Island, we landed Gurden, and after a long and wearisome voyage reached Honolulu. My husband sold the pearl-shell for a thousand pounds—about half its value—and the cutter and the rest of the cargo for six hundred pounds, bought the *Mahina*, and at once began to fit her out and ship an entirely new crew, for the nine men we had with us on the cutter wanted to remain in Honolulu and spend their wages. Undoubtedly some of these men talked about the lagoon and the discovery of the pearl-shell, and were the primary cause of the misfortunes which were to befall us.

'One morning Manuel Barradas came on board and asked my husband if he was in want of a chief-mate. He was, and being satisfied with the man's appearance and qualifications, at once engaged him; and then Barradas said he knew of a very good man as second-mate. This was Paul the Greek.

'A few days before we sailed, Barradas told my husband that he had met a former acquaintance of his, who would like to take passage in the brig for the entire cruise, merely for the pleasure of visiting these little-known islands, and that he was prepared to pay liberally. In the evening Barradas brought his friend on board, and introduced him as Mr Rawlings. My husband and he had quite a long talk. Rawlings was himself a sailor, and had made, he said, a good deal of money as recruiter in the Kanaka labour-trade between Fiji and the Solomon Islands; but was tired of idling away his time in Honolulu, and thought that among the Caroline or Marshall group he might perhaps find an island whereon he could settle as a trader.

'My poor husband fell into the trap devised for him by these three men. Rawlings came on board as passenger, and we sailed direct for

Strong's Island to pick up Gurden. To our great sorrow, we found that the old man was dead and buried—had died a week previously. He had made a will leaving all of his share and interest in the venture to me.

'To a certain extent Barradas had my husband's confidence; but neither he nor Rawlings knew either the name or position of this place—whatever other information they had was obtained from our former crew. They had afterwards, however, thoroughly ingratiated themselves with Mr Tracey; and, though he had not actually revealed to them the name or position of Arrecifos, they knew pretty well everything else concerning it.

'After leaving Port L  le we steered south-west for the Ellice Islands, where my husband knew he could obtain a crew of divers (we could get none in Honolulu); and then, besides divers, he also intended to engage about ten or a dozen families of Ellice Islanders to settle down here permanently, for the British Consul had given him a temporary "letter of protection" and authorised him to hoist the British flag on Arrecifos Lagoon. The Consul strongly advised him to proceed to Sydney and lay his case before the Commodore of the Australian squadron, who, he said, would no doubt send a warship to Arrecifos and take formal possession of the place as British territory. This advice my husband decided to follow. He also meant to buy some diving-suits and pumping-gear; for Gurden had said that he believed the best shell in the lagoon was to be obtained at a depth of eighteen fathoms—too deep for the ordinary native method of diving. You can imagine my delight when he told me that we should be going to Sydney; for that town is my native place, and it was there that we were married seven years ago. We would often talk of what a beautiful home we should make there in the course of a few years.'

Here her fast-falling tears choked her utterance, and Barry bade her rest a while. She obeyed him, and for some ten minutes or so no sound broke the silence but the ever-restless clamour of the surf upon the outer reef, and now and then a whispered word exchanged between the native seamen, who, seated at the other end of the house, regarded her with their dark eyes full of sympathy.

'We made a direct course for the Ellice Islands,' resumed Mrs Tracey, 'and met with light winds till we were near Pleasant Island, when it began to blow steadily from the north-west. We sighted Pleasant Island just before dark, and at half-past eight we could see the lights of the native villages on the shore. That evening my husband had turned in early, for he was not feeling well, and complained of a severe headache. I remained with him till past nine o'clock, and then, seeing that he had fallen asleep, went on deck for some fresh air, for the cabin was very hot and stuffy.



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'My poor husband fell into the trap devised for him by these three men. Rawlings came on board as passenger, and we sailed direct for

Strong's Island to pick up Gurden. To our great sorrow, we found that the old man was dead and buried—had died a week previously. He had made a will leaving all of his share and interest in the venture to me.

'To a certain extent Barradas had my husband's confidence; but neither he nor Rawlings knew either the name or position of this place—whatever other information they had was obtained from our former crew. They had afterwards, however, thoroughly ingratiated themselves with Mr Tracey; and, though he had not actually revealed to them the name or position of Arrecifos, they knew pretty well everything else concerning it.

'After leaving Port Lēle we steered south-west for the Ellice Islands, where my husband knew he could obtain a crew of divers (we could get none in Honolulu); and then, besides divers, he also intended to engage about ten or a dozen families of Ellice Islanders to settle down here permanently, for the British Consul had given him a temporary "letter of protection" and authorised him to hoist the British flag on Arrecifos Lagoon. The Consul strongly advised him to proceed to Sydney and lay his case before the Commodore of the Australian squadron, who, he said, would no doubt send a warship to Arrecifos and take formal possession of the place as British territory. This advice my husband decided to follow. He also meant to buy some diving-suits and pumping-gear; for Gurden had said that he believed the best shell in the lagoon was to be obtained at a depth of eighteen fathoms—too deep for the ordinary native method of diving. You can imagine my delight when he told me that we should be going to Sydney; for that town is my native place, and it was there that we were married seven years ago. We would often talk of what a beautiful home we should make there in the course of a few years.'

Here her fast-falling tears choked her utterance, and Barry bade her rest a while. She obeyed him, and for some ten minutes or so no sound broke the silence but the ever-restless clamour of the surf upon the outer reef, and now and then a whispered word exchanged between the native seamen, who, seated at the other end of the house, regarded her with their dark eyes full of sympathy.

'We made a direct course for the Ellice Islands,' resumed Mrs Tracey, 'and met with light winds till we were near Pleasant Island, when it began to blow steadily from the north-west. We sighted Pleasant Island just before dark, and at half-past eight we could see the lights of the native villages on the shore. That evening my husband had turned in early, for he was not feeling well, and complained of a severe headache. I remained with him till past nine o'clock, and then, seeing that he had fallen asleep, went on deck for some fresh air, for the cabin was very hot and stuffy.

'No one was on the poop but the man at the wheel—a Hawaiian native. Barradas was somewhere on the main-deck, for I heard his voice talking to some of the men.

'I had brought on deck a rug and my pillow; and, telling the man at the wheel to call me at four bells, if I were asleep, I lay down at the back of the wheel-house, so as to be out of the way of the officer of the watch, and out of sight. I had been lying down for about ten minutes, and was wide awake, when Paul the Greek came aft and told the helmsman to go forward and stay there till he was wanted.

'In a lazy sort of a way, I wondered why the second-mate should do this, as it was not his watch on deck; but in another minute or so I heard Rawlings's voice:

"Where is Manuel, Paul?"

"He's coming in a minute," replied the Greek. "Are you sure the skipper is asleep?"

"Yes," answered Rawlings; "and she is with him. There's no fear of her coming on deck."

"What did they mean? I thought. What did Rawlings, who always was most polite and agreeable to me, mean by speaking in this way?"

'I had not long to wait, for presently Barradas joined them, and the three began talking together.

"Can't we make an end of the thing at once and settle them both together?" asked the Greek in his vile jargon.

"Don't be a fool, Paul," answered Rawlings savagely; "we don't want to run our necks into a noose. We want something more than the ship. We want to find out the name of the island, and where it is, before we can do anything like that; and if we find it out to-night, and settle him and his wife, how are we to get to the lagoon without a navigator?"

"True," said Barradas; "but have you had a good look through his cabin for the plan old Gurden gave him?"

"Yes, several times," he answered.

"Perhaps she has it," said Barradas.

"Not she," said Rawlings impatiently; "he doesn't suspect us. Why should he give it to her? No; he has put it away in some place, where only a careful search would find it, and that search can't be made just now. And we don't want it now. When we do want it I can find it. Now, listen to me, and I'll show you how we can do the thing properly."

'A wild impulse to rush past them, rouse my husband, and tell him of the murderous plot that was brewing against his life and mine, for a moment or two held possession of me, Mr Barry; but I resisted it only through fear of their seeing me. Would to God that I had acted upon that impulse, for I believe the crew would have stood by us. But I lay perfectly quiet, and listened, while that smiling fiend Rawlings unfolded his

scheme of treachery and murder to his fellow-villains.

'They could do nothing, he said, until the brig arrived at Sydney. Then, after my husband—whom he called a "silly, unsuspecting ass"—had seen the Commodore, bought all the stores and trade goods needed for the native divers, and also the diving-suits and pumping-gear, he (Rawlings) would find a man capable of navigating the vessel; and then, he said, with a laugh that sent a thrill of terror through me, "we can get rid of him and his wife easily enough, once we are at sea again. They will, I think, both fall overboard soon after we leave Sydney—eh, Paul? Then, my friends, we shall find Gurden's chart and written description of the lagoon easily enough; and, with a navigator on board, we shall continue the voyage, and sail to the fortune awaiting us."

"How can you get such a man without exciting wonder in the captain's mind?" asked Barradas.

"Leave it to me, my dear, doubting Manuel," replied Rawlings in his mocking voice.

'At that moment four bells struck, and another native sailor came aft to take the wheel; and I, after waiting for a minute or two and hearing no further talk, concluded that Rawlings and the Greek had left the poop, and only Barradas remained. I rose and peered cautiously round the corner of the wheel-house to see if I could escape below without being observed; and then the Greek sprang on me from behind, grasped me by the waist, and, carrying me to the rail, flung me overboard.

'When I came to the surface the brig was quite a hundred yards or more away from me, and I could only dimly discern her through the darkness. I raised my voice, and screamed and screamed again; but in a few minutes she had disappeared into the night; and then I tried to give my soul to God, for I knew that the cruel wretches—one of whom had thrown me overboard—would not try to save me.

'How long I continued swimming I cannot tell—it might have been only a few minutes, it might have been an hour or more, for I am a good swimmer—but suddenly I saw a light quite near, and I cried out—so I was told afterwards—"For God's sake, save me!"

'When I regained consciousness I found myself on board a little cutter bound from Pleasant Island to Ocean Island, a hundred and twenty miles away. The master and owner of the cutter was a German trader named Ohlsen, living on Pleasant Island. He treated me most kindly; and when we arrived at Ocean Island, and I lost my reason for many weeks, he nursed me like a mother, and delayed his return to Pleasant Island till I recovered, so that I could go back there with him, and live with his wife and family till some whaling-vessel visited there and I could get a passage to some port in either China or Japan.

'But I had no desire to go there. I knew



that if my husband escaped the murderous designs of Rawlings and his fellow-criminals he would return to Arrecifos; and to Arrecifos I determined to go, even if only to die. Whale-ships—so my rescuer told me—frequently called at Ocean and Pleasant Islands on their way to the north-west Carolines and Japan, and I decided to remain on the lonely little spot and wait for one.

'Six weeks after I landed on Ocean Island, the *Golden City*, of New Bedford, called there. I went on board and told the captain so much of my story as I thought necessary, and asked him to land me in Arrecifos. He did so, and gave me a stock of food and clothing materials. God bless his long, narrow, leather-hued American face and his kindly gray eyes! I shall never forget him.

'He landed me here five months ago. The people knew me at once, and made me very welcome. I told them that I did not know if my husband was alive or dead, but that I had come here to wait. The affection they cherished for old Gurden was very strongly shown when I told them of his death; and I am now living with the relatives of the woman he married here so many years ago.

'When your boat was seen sailing down the lagoon this afternoon the natives were very frightened, thinking another "man-stealing ship," as they call the Hawaiian labour-vessels, was making a second raid upon them. The village on the little island where you are anchored was surprised by the crew of one of these vessels in the night, and every adult person, male and female, seized, handcuffed and carried on board.

It is now deserted. They, as well as myself, knew that if my husband had returned he would have sailed his ship right down here, to this end of the lagoon, where he had anchored previously, instead of lying under the south-east islet. Most of them, therefore, at once took to the bush to hide themselves, and begged me to come with them. But I was determined to go and meet the boat, for I had a hope that I might possibly hear some news of the *Mahina*, and feared that perhaps the boat would only remain a short time and return to the ship before I could get to her. I did not even stay to put on my one pair of boots, but set off at a run; these two young women coming with me, poor creatures, although they were dreadfully frightened. When within half a mile of where you landed I stepped upon a *foli* hidden in the sand, and gave myself this terrible cut.'

Barry took her hand between both of his and pressed it sympathetically. 'Poor lady! you have indeed suffered. Now listen to me, and I will tell you what I propose doing to outwit these infernal ruffians and restore to you your husband's ship. The heartless scoundrels, pirates, and murderers! They shall themselves work for your good.—Joe, and you, Velo, come closer.—These men, Mrs Tracey, will stand by us; and so, I think, will every other man on board.'

'Indeed we will, sir,' said Joe.

'Now, this is my plan,' said Barry.

It did not take him long to explain it, and then, one by one, each man of his boat's crew took his hand and that of Mrs Tracy, and swore to be true to them both.

## WANTED, THE PIED PIPER!

By Mrs J. E. WHITBY.



WITHOUT any declaration of war, with no sound of trumpet or beat of drum, certain inhabitants of Germany are quietly invading and occupying the country of Belgium. It has long been known that France has greedy eyes on this rich little country; but that Germany, which is usually supposed to covet primarily Holland, should be silently pouring her hordes over her Belgian neighbour's frontier is somewhat astonishing. It is the more remarkable, inasmuch as the invasion is proceeding almost unnoticed even by the two countries most concerned, and certainly unnoticed by the great military Powers of Europe.

The integrity of Belgium is, as is well known, guaranteed by Great Britain; but even she will in this case probably not be able to prevent an occupation of territory as unexpected as undesirable.

Fortunately for the prospects of Continental

peace, the invaders, though in large force, and threatening all the destruction to crop and store which must be expected on the arrival of the enemy in great numbers, wear no helmet or plume, carry no cruel rifle or sword, and, though they be clad in coats of uniform colour, leave no masses of slain behind them. Still, though they come in peace, their presence is none the less precursive of danger to property if not to life; and a cry of alarm is beginning to make itself heard from the prosperous and highly-cultivated districts into which these unwelcome invaders—marmot rats, known in Germany as the hamster—are advancing day by day.

The marmot is a native of central Europe, and usually confines its peregrinations to the western boundary. In 1842 a similar incursion took place in the province of Liège; but the raiders were successfully routed, and were believed to have disappeared entirely from Belgium. Now news has come that the dreaded rodents have lately crossed

the Meuse and appeared in the province of Namur in ranks and squadrons.

The hamster is an animal of the size of the large brown Norway rat, and with similar dental formation. With her usual thoughtfulness, Nature has provided it with a coat of neutral tint, the better to escape detection, its fur being of a grayish-brown on the surface, black underneath, and with white markings under the throat. It is a pretty little animal, with a short, shaggy tail and white paws, is very quick in its movements, and easily tamed in captivity. What renders it especially remarkable is that it has cheek-pouches, one on either side, with the openings inside the mouth. These extraordinary organs, which the rodent can distend at pleasure, are alone, of all the mammals of Europe, possessed by the hamster. They serve a very useful and economic purpose, too—the transport to his underground lair of the really important quantity of cereals which he contrives to secure. It has been calculated that each animal can lodge from one to one and a half ounces in each cheek-pouch; it is not, therefore, surprising that considerably over two hundred pounds of food of various kinds have been found in the run of these creatures. What such wholesale depredations would amount to in a year only an unhappy farmer or the 'statistical fiend' could tell.

The runs are constructed with considerable ingenuity, and consist of a number of apartments; some being reserved as sleeping quarters, others as warehouses for provisions, and are approached by different galleries. It is in the month of August, at harvest-time, that he commences, like the prudent ant of fabled story, to lay up food for the winter. He then works hard, filling his cheek-pouches to bursting-point, and traverses the fields with the appearance of a suffering animal with a swollen face. He ransacks fields and barns, and carries off triumphantly all kinds of grain, peas, and beans to his burrow, where he empties his patent travelling-bags by slightly pressing them with his paws; and he also resorts to this expedient when he meets an enemy by the way whom circumstances compel him to fight, promptly unloading himself of his cargo, and rushing to the attack with all the ardour of one whose life is spent in marauding.

In his habits, it will be seen, the hamster resembles the mole, for as soon as the first faint chill of winter is felt he retires to his cosy nest, and, closing it alike to friend and foe, proceeds to live in luxury on the good things with which he so carefully and thoughtfully provided himself in summer. When the cold grows still more intense he curls himself comfortably up and sleeps until the spring appears.

In some parts of Germany the peasant inhabitants protect these animals. Too poor to be particular, they in their turn rob the rodent of the store of corn, &c., which he has with so much

work and intelligence accumulated for his own use. The female hamster has three litters of ten to twelve a year; and, despite their character for gentleness, these animals, when famine stares them in the face, will eat their neighbours or their own brothers without hesitation and with the strictest impartiality. Their bite is extremely dangerous; and it is said that when they have seized on any object, even the hand of a human being, only death itself will force them to relinquish their hold.

A visit from such self-invited robbers is, no doubt, greatly to be deplored; and it is to be hoped that, as in 1842, the intruders will be turned back to their own country. England has once more to thank her geographical position for keeping both human and animal would-be invaders at bay; and the Channel, which was answerable for the failure of Napoleon's plans to add England to his list of conquered countries, will fortunately prove an insuperable barrier—should he ever get as far—to the German hamster also.

#### TRAVELLER'S JOY.

The wild clematis which grows luxuriantly by many English roadsides is known to the country-folk as 'Old Man's Beard' and 'Traveller's Joy.' Any one who has noticed the wealth of blossoms in the summer and of fluffy seed-vessels in the winter will be struck by the aptness of the local names.

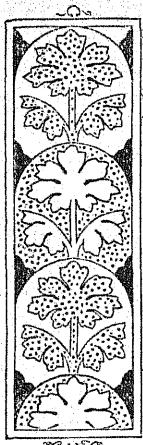
TWining, wreathing, softly drooping,  
Flinging perfume to the breeze,  
Sweet clematis sways the hedgerows  
All across the golden leas,  
Mocking all my frenzied fancies  
With its glistering satin sheen,  
As along the path I wander,  
Musing on the Might-Have-Been.

Unforgiving words and cruel.  
What now matters wrong or right?  
And though bloom, in wanton brilliance,  
Throws its bridal arches white  
O'er the gateway where we parted,  
Where I lost my darling boy—  
All my heartstrings swept by sorrow,  
What care I for 'Traveller's Joy'?

Winter comes: the welcome Winter!  
To my musings more attune.  
'Old Man's Beard' in hoary splendour  
Decks the hedgerows 'neath the moon.  
Hard as iron is the footpath,  
Harder still my anguished heart;  
Pride can scorn the neighbours' pity—  
'Missing' . . . is the cruel part.

By the gateway sink I wearied,  
All my soul for news athirst.  
'Father! give me strength. Uphold me  
Even should it prove the worst!' . . .  
What is this? A touch—a murmur—  
Tidings of my darling boy—  
Changing in one rapturous moment  
'Old Man's Beard' to 'Traveller's Joy.'

J. HARDY.



# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### TAPADAS: THE HIDDEN TREASURES OF PERU.

**I**N the far-distant interior of the old empire of the Incas, upon the fringe of those countries over which extended that unique and barbarous civilisation, customs and habits have changed as little since the fall of that gorgeous despotism as in any part of the world. Without modification, the native races have preserved all their personal cowardice and their collective cruelty, all their abstemiousness (only varied by bouts of drunkenness), and their propensity to hoard, like monkeys and magpies, secreting that hoard in the strangest of places.

The book has yet to be written which will preserve to the world an adequate picture of these strange and isolated peoples—half-children and half-demons—relics of a past world among the railways and telegraphs of the present. Formerly ground down under tyranny, afterwards passed over with the races of the coast to the harsh, then torpid, government of Spain; suffering the change—any change—of rulers, but never acquiescent; possessing no feeling of attachment or loyalty, but for ever watching, waiting for signs of weakness in the ruling race to rebel, to assassinate, to torture; possessing a language so virile that Spanish itself has never been able to supplant or smother it; viewing from afar the strangers who entered their land as conquerors, but neither adopting their customs nor speaking their tongue. Even the Roman Catholic Church, adept at assimilating materials the most diverse, has unfortunately here only produced a type of superstitious idolater, three-fourths a pagan and one-fourth a debased Christian.

Doubtless there still linger among the remotest villages and the older people many legends and tales of the ancient glory of their nation; but among the half-civilised members, who speak more or less Spanish, such tales are of the crudest and most elementary description. Of all these, the most concrete, and the only ones which can be brought to the touchstone of a proof, are those referring to treasure hidden during times of

war or trouble, and never removed. The vast districts formerly known as Upper Peru teem with such stories; some of these are palpably false, a small proportion have been proved to be more or less true, and the great bulk of them remain uninvestigated, awaiting the time when the country shall be sufficiently civilised for the flotation of a Treasure-Seeking Company Limited, to be managed on the most approved principles.

During many years, even centuries, of a disturbed and often despotic rule, doubtless great quantities of the precious metals have been secreted, the greater part of which will probably never be brought to the light of day; but during recent years, by systematic search, when the tradition of the hidden treasure appeared to be more definite than usual, some *tapadas* (hoards) have been discovered, and have well repaid the time and expense of the search, apart from the excitement inseparable from such an enterprise.

The following is a representative instance:

One of the latest of the Incas, to escape from a victorious rival, had retired to a wild spot just below the summits of the Eastern Cordilleras; and here the tradition persistently lingered that in a certain spot high in the mountains the fleeing Inca had buried a treasure which had never been recovered, as he had been murdered on his return to Cuzco. Many generations of the local landholders searched in vain under the scorching midday sun or shivering in the bitter wind that blows at thirteen thousand feet above the sea.

At last the time came, and the man, to open the tomb closed by the fugitive ruler of that long-dead empire. The old proprietors, who, at the conquest, had received a grant of the district from the Spanish Crown, had degenerated into a race of dissolute gamblers; and they sold a part of their possession about the size of a British county for a few thousand pounds to a new man more capable and enterprising than the old race. The legend was investigated; then different versions were obtained from various sources, and carefully compared. It soon became evident that



some key-word had at first been attached to the story; but the most diligent inquiry could discover neither the word itself nor the use to which it was to be put when ascertained. Many years passed; the new owner, by managing the property upon slightly more modern methods—that is, by adopting the improvements of the time of the sixteenth century instead of adhering strictly to the mode of farming as carried on by primeval man—had accumulated a considerable fortune. He had discontinued his diligent search for the lost treasure of the Incas, and was now about to definitely retire to the town and sell the property. One winter night, however, a message was brought that, far away in a distant valley, a woman, reputed to be over a hundred years of age, was dying, and had a word to say to the *patron* before she died. In the morning he started on the long journey over the immense slopes of rock covered with coarse grass, the snow-crowned sunmits rising overhead. At the end of the journey, deep in the recesses of the mountains, was a mud-hut, within which lay a shrivelled, decrepit object that a hundred years before had first looked out, a black-eyed baby, upon the wonderful view of cloud, mountain, and far-distant forest. She was alone, and dying, without relatives or friends to assist her; for she was a witch, and none had dealings with her or ventured near of their own freewill. Feared and hated by her own people, she turned at the end to her *patron*, who cared neither for her charms nor her curses, to tell him that word which was whispered to her in the dim past by the aged grandmother, who had died more than eighty years before, where she was dying now—the word that would reveal the hiding-place of that treasure the secret of which was to be carefully guarded until the Incas should appear again to claim their own and drive the conquerors back to the sea. The word was whispered; it meant in the old language ‘the lake of the two stones.’ That was all; she knew nothing of its application, had no more to tell, and died that night.

Although the word was now known, the difficulties were not all overcome; in fact, many months of eager search followed. At last the place was found—a narrow valley containing two small lakes, in one of which stood, showing above the water, two stones. After a long and unsuccessful search upon the margins, the searchers determined to drain the lake containing the stones. This was next done, and it was at once discovered that the larger stone had been carefully placed where it stood, for under it was a platform of masonry resting on the bed of the lake. With infinite labour an opening was made, as the structure had become solid. What followed will probably never be known except to a very few interested persons. That the treasure was found, and was of considerable worth, is undoubted; but its precise value or of what it consisted has never transpired. A paternal

government is occasionally a little exacting, and in this case, at least, silence was golden.

Another and less extraordinary narrative of treasure hidden many years ago by an old Spanish immigrant states that the owner had built on his property a high and thick *adobe* wall, far too substantial for the purpose it was ostensibly designed to serve—a division between two sections of the farm—and before he died had left strict injunctions that, no matter what else was sold, the strip of land on which this wall was built should always be retained in the family. He left two children, one a son, who took the property; the other a daughter, married to the owner of a neighbouring *propietario*, who had received her dowry. In course of time the descendants of the son became gradually poorer, and little by little alienated the estate. A few years ago the remnants of a once extensive property, including the ancient wall, now half in ruins and wholly useless, were offered for sale. The proprietor of the adjacent farm, the lineal descendant of the daughter of the old Spaniard, bought it eagerly. In this branch of the family had lingered the memory of the last words of the long-dead ancestor, which the other branch had forgotten; and directly the transfer was made the former owner was astonished to see the new proprietor, with all his *peones*, busily engaged in demolishing the apparently useless structure long an eyesore to the neighbourhood. The *tapada* was found, and consisted of gold and silver in coin or bars, amounting to several times the value of the property.

Hoardings have been made not only in the distant past but also in recent years, and are hidden even to-day. The ignorant Indian, profoundly distrustful of banks and similar resources of civilisation, selects a hole in any convenient wall as his strong-box, and sometimes makes his deposit with the most reckless publicity. An old man, the owner of some pack-mules, was in the habit of entering the *patio* of a house in one of the principal towns, where he was not known, about dusk, and going to one particular spot. The owner, happening to notice this, watched him on the next occasion, and saw him take out an *adobe* from the wall and put a small parcel behind it. The *adobe* was removed, and behind it was found a packet containing the equivalent of about four hundred pounds sterling, but partly in notes of a bank that long ago had ceased to exist. The hoard was removed to the house, with the intention of restoring it to the owner upon his next visit; but that visit was never paid. The old man was not seen at the spot again. Whether he was dead, or whether he had indeed sought his hoard, and, finding it gone, had slipped quietly away without making any complaint of the loss of the savings of so many years, will never now be known.

Old houses when they are pulled down are

eagerly searched for *tapadas*, and the searchers do not always go unrewarded. Owing to the character of some of its former occupants, such a find was confidently anticipated during the demolition of a house considerably over two hundred years old; and the walls were carefully probed in many parts by impatient treasure-seekers before operations were commenced. During this search it was observed that a portion of the wall of an upper room was exceptionally thin; and, on an opening being made, a deep recess was disclosed, apparently filled with articles ranged on shelves. Silver candlesticks, dishes, and trays were removed, and still the end was not reached; vases and small ornaments were now discovered; then a layer of plates and dishes. This was apparently a *tapada* of very recent formation, as dishes of a similar pattern were then offered for sale in the local shops. Curtains, tablecloths, and linen now followed. This was a discovery of a hoard of a very varied character; so the man with the longest arm now reached to the innermost side of the recess, and brought out—a dish of hot bread! It was now evident to the searchers either that the find was miraculous or that the so-called *tapada* was only the storeroom or larder of the adjacent house; and the doubt was speedily resolved by the opening of a door in the farther side of the recess and an astonished countenance presenting itself to them.

Of all the existing legends which refer to as yet undiscovered treasure, none is more widely spread than that of the Tres Tortillas. It may be selected as one of the most possible of a large class; at least we have here a well-defined and unmistakable locality, and no actually conflicting facts. On the remotest headwaters of the river Sécure, a branch of the Mamoré, which joins the Madera, an affluent of the Amazon, lies a broken, mountainous country full of great gorges, precipitous cliffs, and *tertiana*. Here one descends abruptly from the regions of eternal snow to a tropical forest where sugar-cane and coffee flourish; and as we leave the high and wind-swept plains, and scramble down the deep, dark gorges to the heat and damp of the *monte*, ague of the most virulent and insistent type lurks in the rain-laden atmosphere, waiting to attack the stranger

who has the hardihood to penetrate these unknown valleys. Here, if Nature suffers the existence of disease, she also provides the remedy—*cascarilla* or Peruvian bark; and the only intruders are the bark-workers and occasional seekers for treasure. As the traveller leaves the high mountain-side, far off in the east can be seen three flat-topped hills, apparently close together, and forming an unmistakable landmark; and if the same region is entered by ascending the river from the eastern side, at certain points in the journey, far ahead in the west, can be seen the same three mountains, which always appear only a few hundred yards apart. These are the famous Tres Tortillas ("three pancakes"), and round these three mountains have accumulated numerous traditions, with probably some foundation of fact. During the Spanish rule it is certain that great quantities of gold were mined and washed upon this mountain range. Old workings are frequently discovered; whole towns built of stone and *adobe*, and deserted churches and cathedrals, are buried in the forest; and from a hundred evidences it is clear these regions have been, and may again be, a source of great wealth. It is quite possible that in the neighbourhood of the Tres Tortillas is a mine of great value; and according to nearly all the current stories this mine contains a vast treasure, consisting of gold ready for transport, and left when the last miners fled, never to return.

Of the various expeditions which have during the past half-century endeavoured to penetrate to this valley a survivor of only one of them returned, and stated that he, with a companion, had found the mouth of the mine, had entered the tunnel, and there had found a great mass of gold stored for removal. This man at least possessed enough faith to make another effort to reach his El Dorado, and is believed to have perished in the attempt among the mountains. Of the other expeditions the result has uniformly been failure. Owing to inadequate resources, to the great natural difficulties of the country, or to sickness and death, up to the present Tres Tortillas have kept their secret, and stand like three giant sentinels, unapproachable and defiant, guarding a treasure which may be worth a king's ransom or may be only the fantasy of a dream.

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

### CHAPTER VIII.—THE DEVIL'S JACKAL.



GOT little sleep that night; my brain was too busy turning over and over all these matters concerning mademoiselle, and seeking some way in which I could be of assistance to her.

What did Roussel mean by saying that Lepard had gobbled Gaston des Comptes? Vaurel's sud-

den explosion had driven it for the time out of my mind; but in the night-watches it started up and refused to be laid. What did he mean? Taken literally, there was only one thing he could mean, and that was that Lepard had had the brother removed because he was a hindrance to his designs on mademoiselle; and that pointed to a false accusation and an un-

just condemnation. I felt myself getting into deep waters.

Just then what seemed to my restless brain a low laugh from the adjoining box-bed, but which might only have been a snore or a gurgle, reminded me of Philippe the artist's assertion that Roussel was half-crazy; and I doubted if any reliance could be placed on anything he said. I made up my mind, however, to sound him on the subject in the morning.

If only I could find out how to help mademoiselle! What with the Abbé, the Mother Superior, and Lepard, she must have trying times; and here was I, aching to spend myself in her service for love of her beautiful face and wonderful eyes, and yet unable to move hand or foot for her—an absolute outsider though all my heart was in the game.

It was some consolation to know that the interests of the various parties at the Château were opposed to one another, at all events in part. The Church might combine against the army, but I could not imagine the possibility of all three parties coalescing for the spoliation of mademoiselle. As the clashing of interests made for delay, and time has a way of straightening things out, I thought that matters, bad as they were, might have been worse.

Tossing restlessly in the close quarters of my box-bed, I fancied more than once that I heard that low chuckling laugh from the adjoining bunk, and this kept me from closing an eye for the rest of the night. Before morning I had resolved to make a change which had been in my mind for some time past, and which, indeed, I had not adopted before only out of consideration for Jeanne and her mother; but, now that they had another lodger, it would not be considered a defection if I went to live at Vaurel's little stone house down by the river, as he had more than once suggested. We should still come up to the inn to dinner, and so I could still keep in touch with Jeanne for news from the Château, and she and her mother would suffer no loss.

The news Jeanne obtained through Hortense since the arrival of the colonel had been of the meagrest. Lepard, she reported, had long conversations with mademoiselle whenever he could get her by herself; but, as a rule, the priest put in an appearance as soon as he learned they were together. The priest and the colonel were most polite to one another; but Hortense's private opinion was that there was no love lost between them. Meanwhile mademoiselle was pale and silent, and—again in Hortense's private opinion—looked as if she could not stand the mental strain very much longer.

Roussel was loafing about aimlessly after morning coffee, when I suggested a stroll and a smoke. He accepted a cigar from my case and sauntered moodily beside me.

'M. Roussel,' I said, 'will you pardon me refer-

ring for one moment to something you said last night?'

He glanced quickly at me, and his dark face flushed hotly for a moment.

'It was this,' I said quickly, lest he should mistake my meaning and take affront when none was intended; 'you said that this Colonel Lepard had gobbled mademoiselle's brother. Would you mind telling me just what you meant by that?'

He puffed at his cigar in silence, and then said quietly, 'I would esteem it a favour, monsieur, if you would refer no more to last night. I have no recollection of saying any such thing.'

'Oh, but you did, without a doubt. Your remark has been in my mind all night.'

He shook his head. 'If I did say anything so extremely foolish, the sooner it is forgotten the better. I must have been slightly off my head.'

He declined to say anything more; though, from his manner, I believed that he could have given me the enlightenment I sought if he had chosen to do so. However, he did not choose, and there was an end of it. Presently Vaurel hove in sight along the road, and Roussel turned abruptly into the wood and left me.

'Ha, ha!' laughed Vaurel as he came near. 'Monsieur the artist has no desire to continue my acquaintance.'

'I was trying to get at the meaning of something he said last night. It has been running in my head ever since.'

'About mademoiselle?'

'No; about her brother. He said Lepard had gobbled him. Now, what did he mean by that?'

'Heaven knows. Did you ask him?'

'Yes. He denied saying any such thing.'

'I remember it,' said Vaurel, casting back his thoughts. 'It was just before I rolled him over.'

'Yes.'

'Sometimes a fool like that lets his mouth run away with him. *Tiens!* whom have we here?'

It was a man in an officer's undress uniform stepping briskly along towards us.

'Reinforcements for the military party at the Château,' suggested Vaurel.

The officer stopped as he came opposite us, and touching his *képi* with careless finger, asked, 'Can you tell me the way to the Château, messieurs?' His face was dark and keen, tanned to the colour of leather by some hot sun.

'Straight along through the village, monsieur,' replied Vaurel, regarding him closely.

'Thanks!' and he strode on.

'Now, who the deuce is that?' said Vaurel, looking after him. 'And what does he want at the Château? The colonel probably. A captain of artillery; has served in Algiers, I should say. Shifty eyes; not a man I should like to serve under. A colleague of M. le Colonel's on the General Staff probably, and rotten like the rest of them. *Ciel!* What stories I have heard of the



way they treat the men in Algiers! It's a wonder that any officer ever comes back alive.'

Vaurel was delighted when I told him I was coming to lodge with him. He carried down all my belongings during the morning, and procured for me a camp-bedstead and bedding similar to the one he used, and I found it extremely comfortable and decidedly more airy than the box-bed up at the inn. Boulot showed his approval by immediately adopting my bed as his sleeping-place during the day when he was not otherwise engaged; so we were all quite pleased with the change, and for myself it bore fruit of consequence almost immediately.

I told Vaurel of Roussel's quiet acceptance of his rough remonstrance, but at the same time expressed my own doubts as to the sincerity of it, explaining my reasons, and so dropped into the telling of my whole connection with mademoiselle. I showed him the portrait, with which he was mightily taken, and only regretted that it was the work of 'that pig of an artist.'

I told him frankly that it was the charm of mademoiselle's sweet face which had brought me to Cour-des-Comptes, through that accidental meeting in the train, and that I was ready and anxious to render her every service in my power.

He carefully rammed the whole matter into his pipe with my tobacco, and smoked it thoughtfully, and then said:

'It is well! Monsieur is an honourable man, neither rotten, nor crazy, nor yet of the Church. I am with him.'

We fished up-stream towards Bency that afternoon, and went farther than we intended. On

turning homewards we climbed out of the valley to the high-road for the sake of the easier walking. It was quite dark before we passed the road leading up to the station, and as we drew near to the bridge over the river Vaurel suddenly crushed me into the bushes by the side of the path and sank down beside me. Then I heard voices approaching.

'Well, in fine, my friend,' said one voice, harsh and rasping, 'if you talk till you're blue I can do nothing more than I am doing. You see how matters stand. You will just have to wait till'—

'*Peste!* Wait! wait! wait! Haven't I waited till my patience is in rags and I am at my wits' end for money?'

'I also; but I can move no faster.'

'Well, I can't stand it. I shall blow my brains out or bolt if things go on this way.'

'Don't be a fool. Just sit tight and wait. My stake is bigger than yours, and I don't intend to lose it'—

They passed out of hearing, and I was beginning to gather myself out of the uncomfortable heap into which I had tumbled, when Vaurel's arm again flattened me down, as another figure flitted silently past us in the wake of the others.

'Monsieur the artist,' whispered Vaurel. Then we picked ourselves up and went on our way.

'If we could have heard all that those two have said to one another since they met to-day we should know a good deal more about some things than we do,' remarked Vaurel.

Which was no doubt very true, but left much to be desired from a practical point of view.

## THE FINSEN INSTITUTE IN COPENHAGEN.

By EDITH SELLERS.



THE Danes have many institutions of which they are proud, and with good reason; they have one, however, of which they are more proud than of all the others put together.

Even Dr George Brandes, who is not prone to enthusiasm, regards the Finsen Light Institute with unbounded admiration; it is the most interesting thing in all Copenhagen, he declares, and the most original. Go where you will, in Denmark, you hear of it; hear, too, that see it you must before you leave the country. Peasant farmers in quite remote districts know all about this institute; for in most villages there is some one or other with a relative, friend, or acquaintance who has been there as a patient. In Jutland the feeling with regard to it is, of course, stronger than elsewhere; for its founder, Dr Finsen, is himself a Jutlander. There the people's faces glow with delight as they speak of him and his great discovery. 'Doctors come from

all parts of the world to learn of him,' they will tell you proudly. 'There is a Light Institute in Berlin, just a copy of ours, you know; there is one in Paris, too, at the Exhibition; and there will soon be one in London, we hear. To think that Germany, France, and England must come to our little country to find out how to cure their invalids!'

Interesting as the Finsen Institute undoubtedly is, it is a place that most people would do well to think twice before visiting, unless, indeed, they were going as patients. For there are terrible sights to be seen there—sights so terrible that they haunt those who see them for days after. Between nine and ten o'clock in a morning men, women, and children may be noticed, in all parts of Copenhagen, making their way to this institute; for no one may live there—it is for out-patients only. They are of all nationalities, all ages, all classes. Some of them are so rich that they bring with them their own

attendants; others, and they the majority, are so poor that their communes must pay their fees for them. There is no mistaking them; they all, or rather almost all, bear the same badge—a piece of white linen by which part of a face or a hand is carefully hidden from sight. For they are suffering from lupus, that most distressing of all forms of tuberculosis, a disease which in its earlier stages is rarely found excepting in faces or hands.

Once the patient is in the institute, the bandages are, of course, removed; and it is then that one realises the full horror of lupus, and realises, too, how deep a debt of gratitude the world owes to Dr Finsen for discovering how it may be cured. I have seen there faces that, owing to its ravages, have lost all likeness to humanity; hands that have ceased to be hands. These are the bad cases—the cases that have been sent to the institute too late; for even there miracles cannot be wrought—an ear or a nose that is gone cannot be restored. All that can be done is to stop the further progress of the disease. I have seen there faces that are now quite pleasant to look upon, although only a few months before—to judge by the photographs taken at the time—they were such as one would have walked miles to avoid seeing. There was one young girl who was just on the point of being sent home cured. She was remarkably pretty; she had a scar on one cheek, it is true, but it was too slight to be any real disfigurement; yet when she paid her first visit to the institute her own mother might well have shrunk away from her with horror. All the patients are photographed at regular intervals during the time they are under Dr Finsen's care. Thus by comparing any one of them with his or her own series of likenesses, it is easy to judge of the progress that has been made in combating the disease. In the overwhelming majority of cases the improvement is very marked indeed. When I was at the institute a large percentage of the patients there were evidently on a fair way to complete recovery, and not a few of them were rapidly losing all trace of disease.

Never was there a cure that entailed less suffering than that Dr Finsen has discovered; his patients, indeed, have no pain whatever to endure, hardly even a touch of discomfort. All they have to do is to lie still on comfortable lounges for an hour a day, and let the sun—or an electric lamp—shine down on them. For it is light, and light alone, that works their cure.

That light has a certain bactericidal property was well known before ever Dr Finsen began his investigations; what he was the first to discover is, that this property does not lie only in the whole uncoloured light, but that it is attached to one special part of the spectrum. He proved by a series of experiments that, when bacteria are killed by the action of light, it is the

chemical rays—that is, the blue, violet, and ultra-violet, that kill them; and that the ultra-red, red, yellow, and green rays have no effect on them whatever. This was an important discovery, as it showed that the ultra-red, red, yellow, and green rays might be excluded from light without impairing its bactericidal power; and it was the presence of these rays, especially of the ultra-red and red rays, that, owing to the heat they engender, had therefore prevented the use of light for the treatment of disease. For light is powerless to destroy bacteria unless it be highly condensed; and if it be highly condensed it burns whatever is subject to its influence. But, as Dr Finsen showed, it is the ultra-red and red rays that engender heat, whereas it is the chemical rays that destroy bacteria. If, therefore, the ultra-red and red rays be excluded, light, although it still retains its bactericidal property, may yet be highly condensed without danger of its inflicting burns. As the result of other experiments, he discovered that the chemical rays of light, if highly condensed, act not only on the surface of the skin, but, providing it be bloodless, on the whole skin; that they penetrate it, in fact, and destroy any bacteria it may contain.

Dr Finsen does not content himself with enunciating theories; when he makes a discovery his first thought is how it can be turned to account for the alleviation of suffering. No sooner, therefore, had he convinced himself that the chemical rays of light, if separated from the heat-rays, could be used without danger for the destruction of bacteria than he set to work to try to devise means whereby they might be used for the destruction of the bacteria that are the cause of the disease in the human skin—for the cure of lupus, in fact. In this he has succeeded. By means of certain ingenious contrivances he is now able to exclude the red rays from the light that falls on his patients, and to condense the blue, violet, and ultra-violet rays to such a degree that they destroy any bacteria on which they are brought to bear—destroy them, too, without injuring the skin in which they are embedded; and, by destroying the bacteria which cause lupus, they cure the disease itself.

In summer, whenever the sun is shining, the 'light' treatment is carried on in the garden attached to the Finsen Institute; and a curious spectacle the patients afford as they lie there. They each have a special nurse of their own, who, during the hour they are under treatment, presses an odd-looking little apparatus on to the part of the face or hand that is diseased. It consists of a plate of quartz and a plain convex lens of quartz, both framed in a conical brass ring, and with two tubes fixed between them. Cold water is kept running in at one of these tubes and out at the other. The use of this apparatus is to force the blood from the skin on which it is pressed, and thus enable the chemical

rays to penetrate it the more easily; while the water is there merely to keep the skin cool.

By the side of the patient there is another apparatus, a large movable lens fixed in a stand in such a position as to be in a direct line between the sun and the piece of skin requiring treatment. This lens is composed of two glasses—one plain, the other curved—framed in a brass ring, the space between them being filled with a weak solution of blue vitriol. It condenses the sun's rays that fall on it, while the water it contains, together with the blue vitriol dissolved in the water, intercepts the ultra-red, red, and yellow rays. Thus, practically, the only rays that pass through the lens, and therefore the only rays that reach the area of skin requiring treatment, are the chemical; and, as they are highly condensed, they destroy the bacteria on which they fall. The whole treatment is simple in the extreme. It consists of forcing by means of one apparatus the blood from the area of skin that is diseased, and then of bringing to bear on this skin, by means of another apparatus, highly condensed light from which the heat-producing rays have been excluded.

In Copenhagen, as in London, it is by no means every day, unfortunately, that the sun shines; through the greater part of the year, indeed, Dr Finsen has to have recourse to electric light for his patients, because the sunlight is too feeble. Whichever light be used the treatment is practically the same, excepting that in the case of electric light, instead of a solution of blue vitriol, distilled water is used to exclude the

heat-giving rays; and, instead of glass, quartz is used for the lens, lest the strength of the ultra-violet and violet rays be impaired.

It is not only for the treatment of lupus that Dr Finsen has turned his discovery to account, but also for that of smallpox, a disease in which the majority of mankind are more keenly interested. The well-known red-room cure is merely an application of his 'light' theory. He has proved by numerous experiments that the same chemical rays which cure lupus aggravate inflammatory or eruptive skin diseases; that, for instance, in cases of smallpox they intensify the severity of the disease by increasing the inflammation of the skin and causing suppuration; and from this his deduction is, that persons suffering from smallpox should never be exposed to light containing chemical rays. According to his theory, a smallpox patient should always be lodged in a room from which all light is excluded excepting what passes through something red—the windows and doors must be covered with red curtains, and the lamp must have a red shade. In this way all chemical rays are excluded, as they cannot pass through red. This treatment has already been tried again and again not only in Denmark but also in Germany, France, Sweden, and Italy, and always with the same result. In every case the patient has had the disease slightly, and in no single case has it left him with any disfigurement.

For those who intend to visit Copenhagen, the Danish Tourist Society has just issued an illustrated booklet, *Copenhagen, the Capital of Denmark*, which is handy and easy of reference.

## THE DEGRADATION OF KWANG.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.



NE morning, shortly after this interview with Cheng, I took my departure from Peking and made my way with all secrecy and despatch to Tsi-nan. Certainly I had formulated no fixed plan, nor did I expect to formulate one until I had arrived at my destination and taken my proper bearings. The information that Cheng had vouchsafed, though meagre, was yet capable of being put to some use. Though it was evident that he had failed in his endeavours to bring Kwang to book, he had yet succeeded in laying certain persons under suspicion in connection with the massacre. One of these was an individual of the name of Li Min, a one-eyed tailor of some apparent notoriety in Tsi-nan. Though Cheng had been unable definitely to pronounce against this man, the tailor was nevertheless of sufficient importance to inspire a certain amount of uneasiness. It was known that many suspected revolutionaries had been seen at his house, while his sentiments regarding

foreigners had been somewhat freely expatiated upon in certain circles. At one time it had been suspected that he was the veritable leader of the attack upon the English; but the account of his personal appearance did not tally with that of the diminutive individual who had urged the mob on to such frightful excesses. Of course the gray beard which the ringleader wore had been adopted for the purpose of disguise.

I thought much of this illustrious tailor, Mr Li Min, as I sped onward to my destination; and it was towards the honourable abode of the exalted maker of clothes that I directed my steps when at length I duly reached the city of Tsi-nan. Here, if anywhere, in what was evidently a very hotbed of revolution, I might be able to increase my store of knowledge. Cheng having provided me with Li Min's address, I had little difficulty in discovering his whereabouts. The street which that illustrious one honoured with his exalted presence was an exceedingly untidy, not to say disreputable-looking, thoroughfare, and was situated



in the midst of a network of lanes and alley-ways utterly bewildering to the stranger. However, after many inquiries, I found myself opposite Mr Li's unpretentious residence, and walked past it very slowly before making up my mind to enter.

Beyond the profession of tailor, a notification over Mr Li's door informed all and sundry that bedrooms were to be had at a moderate price; which proved that in China, as elsewhere, the business of political agitator is not a lucrative one. As I have said, the locality was not enticing; but Mr Li's acquaintance was just then very much to be desired. So, after walking to the end of the street, I turned and slowly retraced my steps.

Entering the open door, I found myself in a long, low, dark room, which seemed to stretch back indefinitely. Here, when my eyes became accustomed to the semi-gloom, I beheld the dim outlines of two men sitting cross-legged upon the floor, with some work upon their knees. I bowed low towards the dim figures, and gave them salutation. Something in the manner of an unintelligible mumble was vouchsafed as a reply.

'Is the honourable master within?' I asked suavely.

'I am he,' said the foremost figure in a harsh voice. 'Will you condescend to name your exalted business?'

'From the illustrious sign above your doorway I gathered the information that you have rooms to let. May a contemptible stranger crave the honour of being permitted to occupy one?'

The man slowly arose and advanced more into the light, and I beheld a gaunt figure, crowned with a cadaverous face which possessed but one eye, and that an exceedingly unsympathetic one. A clot of red flesh disastrously filled the place which had been occupied by the other eye. Mr Li Min was not what one would call prepossessing.

'My hovel is but a degraded one, Excellency. Yet, if your illustrious condescension will sink so low, it may be within my power poorly to accommodate you.'

'I accept the offer with diffidence, knowing how unworthy I am to take up my abode in a dwelling over which the Virtues keep eternal guard.'

Mr Li's mouth underwent a momentary spasm, and his one eye played over me in the most curious manner; but I returned the scrutiny with a stolid stare which was thoroughly Chinese. Mr Li would have needed his two eyes to see the thoughts which were rioting in my brain.

After some further talk I was shown up a flight of dirty stairs to a room which might, in English parlance, be called the first-floor-back. It was not an entrancing chamber, and the outlook was confined to the chimneys and roofs of the houses in the adjacent street. Consequently, for the sake of appearances, I began to beat down the worthy tailor; but, after a wordy warfare extend-

ing over some quarter of an hour, we came to terms.

'Your Excellency is proficient in your honourable calling,' he said in a tone anything but nice.

'Of my calling?' I repeated. 'Know you it?' The question had a deeper meaning than Mr Li imagined.

'I take your Excellency to be no less than a merchant.'

'Why?'

'You drive an honourable bargain so celestially.'

I smiled good-humouredly. It was just as well to let the illustrious Li flatter himself. A little self-complacency is very soothing.

'What can hope to escape the far-seeing power of your unfailing wisdom? I am from the province of Quang-tong, where I have the felicity to reside with a father distinguished for his many virtues. I am on my way from Nanking to Peking; and if your high superiority would be pleased to order from our firm, I can supply you with some of the most illustrious silks to be found in the Middle Kingdom.'

'Excellency,' he replied, 'it would give me unbounded pleasure to have the honour of dealing with the virtuous and exalted firm which you have the extreme felicity to represent; but, alas! the poor for whom I work are not permitted to wear silk.'

'Ah!' I said, remembering the reputed privities of the tailor, 'the cursed inequalities of life press hard upon the poor.'

'Truly, Excellency.' It was strange, and yet not strange, that he should suddenly become an interesting personality. His face grew stern, his brows knitted with thought, and his one eye flamed with a fierce intelligence. 'But what are you to do with an ignorant populace that cannot think—a mean, craven set of wretches who can do nothing for themselves, yet who are contemptible enough to spurn the hand that would aid them?'

'That the people are ignorant is not the fault of the people,' I said, delighted at having so soon discovered the *penchant* of my host, 'but of those who, for their own selfish ends, purposely keep the poor in ignorance.'

Li eyed me closely.

'You speak boldly.'

'Because I have thought deeply, and because I see the ancient power and glory of our country passing away. Oh for the strong hand!'

'Yes,' said the tailor, 'the strong hand, Excellency. That is what we want here to hurl back this foreign advance. See you no sign of it in the distance?'

'Nay, I know not what to think. Sometimes, in dreams, my friend, I behold the strong hand ungloved, and I marvel much and know it cannot be, because the hand is that of a *Woman*!'

'Why not a woman's hand, Excellency, if it be stronger than that of a weak man?'

'Ay—why not?'

'Why not, indeed, Excellency? Strange as it may seem, I too have seen that Woman's hand—ay, even I in my contemptible capacity as a mender of old clothes. It is strong and firm, Excellency, and of great weight too, though of delicate proportions. It has been felt many times throughout this Middle Kingdom; it will be felt with more effect in the future.'

'You speak prophetically, my friend.'

'With the knowledge not born of speculation,' he added oracularly.

'Yet the foreigner grows stronger every day.'

Mr Li smiled unpleasantly. It was not that his face grew more distinctly hideous with each unnecessary wrinkle; but the look of subtlety which crept into those wrinkles added a decidedly repelling aspect to a visage which nature had done nothing to adorn.

'His end is near, Excellency. In Tsi-nan we know how to serve him.'

'Ay, I have heard something of all this, and of the noble exploits of our people. They say those English dogs fought stubbornly?'

'Indeed, yes, Excellency; but Heaven is very kind to the strong. It is an abominable thing, of course, that people should break the peace; but what would you? After all, they were only foreigners.'

'And foreigners are not worthy of the fuss which is made over them—at least, not worthy of the lives of the half-dozen noble fellows who have already suffered decapitation.'

The tailor favoured me with an inscrutable smile, or one which might have appeared so to the unsophisticated; but it so happened that I knew more of this affair than Mr Li imagined.

'I suppose,' I added with a knowing look, 'that rumour has not erred in reporting that those whom the law would call the "real culprits" suffered the extreme penalty?'

'I know not, of course,' he replied; 'but I believe his Excellency the Viceroy has thus stated it in proclamation. Be sure the law cannot err.'

'Not, at any rate, when his Excellency Kwang sits in the chair of justice.'

'A great and wise ruler is his Excellency. Would there were one such in every province of the Empire.'

'Ah!' I answered. 'Heaven dare not grant us such extreme felicity, lest we forget that we are mortal.'

Then, from such topics of high moment, we gradually descended to the more ordinary subject of ourselves and our personal affairs, and eventually I left, promising to return in an hour with my baggage and samples; for, in my guise of bagman, I had to provide myself with the necessary outfit. As this was a foreseen contingency, I had entered the city prepared, so that in less than the hour stipulated I returned to Mr Li with my belongings on my shoulder.

Believing, as I did, that through the tailor I should receive such information as would enable me to confirm Cheng's suspicion concerning the execution of the real culprits, I played a waiting game with much consistency; but for many days nothing came to reward my vigilance. Naturally, in my character of bagman, much of my time was spent abroad; but even when the illustrious tailor conceived me far away I was often in the vicinity of his domicile. What I hoped—but vainly, I feared—was to catch a view of the diminutive person who had led the riot on that awful night; but in this I was doomed to disappointment. Of course I had no expectation of seeing the gray beard, that being an obvious disguise; but the diminutive leader was to me a very real person.

During the whole of this time Mr Li himself proved a model of a tailor, working with an assiduity which I hardly expected to find in a paid agitator. There was absolutely nothing suspicious about him or his actions. True, many people called at his shop, but only, as far as I could judge, by way of business; and I was beginning to despair of the tactics I had adopted when something happened which put me instantly on the alert.

It was the tenth day of my stay in Tsi-nan, and I knew that my landlord would soon begin to wonder at a man of my trade stopping so long in one town. Indeed, it was this fear which led me to his shop on the evening of that tenth day, and I was in the midst of an explanation, and an apology for my projected departure, when the door was flung suddenly open and a man stepped hurriedly into the apartment.

Li, who still sat stitching by the dim light—for the day was fast declining—no sooner looked up and saw the stranger than he bounded to his feet with an alacrity which was most astonishing, and his general demeanour at once became extremely obsequious.

'Excellency!' he muttered.

The stranger nodded haughtily, but without speaking. Then he honoured me with an insolent scrutiny. I bowed low, for I at once perceived that the fellow, if not a man of importance, assumed the airs of one with some degree of success.

The man's face was somewhat forbidding, his mouth being extremely thick and ugly, his nose a pronounced snub with wide nostrils; and though his stature was small, he carried himself with much dignity, real or affected. That he belonged to the well-to-do order of beings his dress and manner proclaimed. At last he spoke, and the tone of his voice was in keeping with his impatient bearing. His annoyance, whatever the cause of it, was most pronounced. Indeed, he took no pains to hide his ill-humour.

'Are those things ready?'

'Yes, Excellency.'

He waved his hand towards an inner room, and Li, making way for him, bowed low to hide his agitation. The stranger, passing, honoured me with a slight inclination of the head, then disappeared into that inner room, and I went out into the street. But I had not taken a dozen paces along the cobbles before I came to a sharp standstill, brought up, as it were, by a sudden thought. Who was this diminutive, haughty personage who patronised a slop tailor?

Ever ready to piece two and two together, my brain instantly began to join the links of an imaginary chain, and in a minute I had forged a very pretty romance. But it was not all romance. The diminutive person, at least, was a tangible reality, and perhaps a man of some importance. At any rate, one could do no harm by keeping in touch with him a little while longer.

It must have been a full half-hour before my patient vigil was rewarded. Then, a dim figure in the dim street, I beheld him emerge from Li's house and come hurriedly towards me. I knew him instantly by his diminutive figure. But what was this? The little gentleman I had met was as clean-shaven as myself; this individual had a *full gray beard*! My heart gave a great leap. Heaven! but this was a strange piece of good fortune.

I drew back into the shadow of a doorway as he advanced; and, though he passed within three or four yards of me, he did not become aware of my presence. Indeed, even if he had seen me it would have meant nothing, for the Chinese have a way of standing in dark doorways, and of slipping in and out of the shadows with soft, mysterious movements, which, though disconcerting to the stranger, conjuring up as it does ambuscades and stabs in the back, has not quite the same meaning to the native. However, I was glad he had not noticed me, for if his curiosity had prompted him to look closely he might have wondered why Li's lodger hung about in dark corners.

Allowing him to precede me, I followed softly in his footsteps, my brain rife with conjecture as to his ultimate destination. My curiosity, I need scarcely say, did not abate when I discovered that,

instead of making for the better part of the town, where one might naturally expect such a distinguished gentleman to reside, he deliberately plunged into the lowest slums. Here, before a dilapidated building which abutted on to a narrow court, he stopped; then taking a hasty survey round, knocked with a low scraping noise upon the door. I, who had followed in the shadow all this time, stopped with him, so that his scrutiny failed to detect my darker shadow in the gloom of the street. After waiting a minute or two he knocked again, this time more peremptorily, and presently he was admitted. Then the door closed softly, and I was left alone with some strange thoughts to keep me company.

My vigil this time must have lasted a full hour, and a weary, dreary period it proved; but, like all vigils, it came to an end at last. I believe I was almost dozing in my corner when the door softly opened. At first I could scarcely realise it; but when I saw the diminutive form advance I awoke to the full significance of the fact. Throwing a hasty glance up and down the court, the man set out rapidly to retrace his steps. Of course I followed at his heels. This time his way led from the poorer quarter of the town, and he walked with a vigour not in keeping with his patriarchal beard.

Needless to say, my mind was full of the strangest conjecture, and I entertained many projects of discovering the identity of this little gentleman, all of which were necessarily abandoned; but conjecture ripened quickly as I saw him make straight for the Yamen of the Viceroy Kwang. Realising now what I had scarcely dared to hope, I drew near, on the other side of the street. He turned to me as I passed, and though it was too dark to distinguish each other, I distinctly saw that he had taken off his false beard.

On being presented at the Yamen next day I was duly introduced to Kwang, and almost immediately after to his son, who happened to be no other than Mr Li's diminutive visitor.

Perhaps it is unnecessary to add that the English demands were fully met. The subsequent degradation of the great Viceroy Kwang was something more than a nine days' wonder.

## CYCLE TOURING ADVENTURES.

By ARTHUR CANDLER.



THE pleasures of a cycling tour are very much increased by the numerous little adventures occurring on the wheelman's journey—adventures which never come to the man who spends his prosaic holidays of a few weeks in one place. The cycle-tourist enjoys continuous change of scene, a variation of resting-places for the night, and

partakes of nearly every meal at a different place. Thus he has unrivalled opportunities of studying the characters of many of the people he meets. Even a commonplace tour is crowded with more or less pleasing incidents that remain indelibly impressed on his memory, and enable him to live over again the little holidays that occur, perhaps, too seldom as breaks in the routine of his busy life.

In the course of two or three Continental tours



I have been arrested three times, and was liberated on each occasion without any serious consequences and with very little delay. One of these arrests took place in France several years ago, when cyclists did not tour on the Continent in such numbers as they now do, and at a time when the French were unusually suspicious of foreigners. I had entered France from Switzerland, and was stopped at Bellegarde by soldiers, who asked me to explain who I was, where I came from, &c. I carried on the handle-bar of my bicycle a little sketch-map of the districts I was touring through, with the necessary details filled in, in shorthand; and as my explanations—given, I fear, in very bad French—were considered unsatisfactory, I was arrested and taken away for examination. An interpreter who did not understand a word of English was procured, and then I discovered they had mistaken me for a German. Later, when an English interpreter had been found, my explanations, after a severe cross-examination, were accepted, my bicycle was returned, profuse apologies were made, and I resumed my journey after some three hours' delay.

On the second occasion I was with a friend. Punctures delayed us near a small village on the road to Nancy. Here, our small change being exhausted, we were obliged to tender half-a-sovereign in payment for light refreshments. English gold was accepted freely in the large towns; but our reception at the little inn had been hostile from the first, and on tendering this coin the landlord was decidedly rude, and indignantly refused it. Although I promised to forward a postal-order directly we got change at Nancy, he impudently said we could not be allowed to go unless we left a watch and gold chain as security for his bill of three francs. A gendarme was now sent for, who told the landlord he had acted wisely. Holding the half-sovereign in his hand, he said to me, 'How dare you tell me that this is an English coin? Do you mean to say that the English people are such fools as not to put the name of the coin on it?' I had never noticed the absence of the name on our gold coins, and was completely caught up by the gendarme when I told him that of course he would find the name on it. 'Ah!' he exclaimed, 'show me the name, then.' I was dumfounded when I examined the coin; and, turning to the landlord, the gendarme exclaimed triumphantly, 'That coin is not worth a sou; it is only some silly kind of medal. You were wise to refuse it.' We were, therefore, compelled to leave a watch, as the gendarme threatened to lock us up until we either paid in French money or left something valuable. When we thought our troubles were over, and were mounting our bicycles, the gendarme suddenly seized them and said, 'I see you have photographic apparatus there, and I demand to see what photos you have taken since you entered France.' Nor was this enough.

He insisted, before releasing us, on examining us as to our route and searching every particle of our luggage; and all the while a crowd of women and children jeered at us, with unkind remarks, insisting that we were Germans. Their hostile behaviour was much increased when the gendarme told them that from our answers to his questions he perceived we knew too much about the country. At last, after considerable vexation and delay, we were allowed to continue our journey, to the accompaniment of a perfect storm of hisses from the hostile crowd, which had assumed large proportions during the controversy.

The last occasion on which I was arrested was at Ravenna, in Italy, while there were serious bread-riots going on, in May 1898. We were delayed for a very short time. After satisfactory proofs of our identity, we were released with an ample apology; in fact, we were very courteously treated by the police while under arrest.

Once, in Spain, I had an amusing experience. I was at a seaport town, and had strolled out from the hotel for an early morning walk before resuming my journey. I walked on for a mile or two beyond the town, and then left the road to walk along the shore and enjoy a quiet bask on the rocks in the sun. I was sitting reading a book, and occasionally glanced round to where some Spanish soldiers were placing a cannon in position on a little hill about a quarter of a mile away. I had not been thus occupied very long when a soldier came from the party and made a long palaver in Spanish, of which language I did not then know a single word. It was in vain I showed him that all he said was unintelligible to me. He became very excited, and waved his arms about like a man in a play. After a quarter of an hour of this he walked off, looking very unhappy, and I resumed my reading. However, in a short time he reappeared, trying to look fierce, accompanied by a pleasant-looking officer in gorgeous uniform and a private soldier with rifle and fixed sword-bayonet. The officer in the most polite way possible addressed me in Spanish and held out his hand, which I immediately grasped cordially, saying in English, 'How do you do? I am very glad to make your acquaintance.' Of course he did not understand what I said; but he soon showed me that he only intended to lift me up by the hand and get me to move away. As far as signs could do it, I let him know I was quite comfortable where I was, and that I did not understand what he was driving at. At last I pulled out a Spanish and English conversation book, which I handed to him, signifying he should pick out the most appropriate sentence for the occasion. He looked carefully through the book, and presently a satisfied sort of smile came over his face as he pointed to the words, 'Let us turn round and walk home by another road.' I at once fell in with this suggestion; he took my arm, led me to the main road,

then politely pointed my way back to the town, gave me a very hearty shake of the hand, and departed looking immensely pleased with himself.

Another totally different kind of adventure was that of being lost at night in a foreign town. It happened this way: I was touring alone, and had arrived towards dusk at a large town built partly on a river and partly on a canal. Continuing my ride through several streets, I at length came to what looked like a suitable hotel for the night. I put up my bicycle, had a good dinner, and then went out for a short walk. For an hour I wandered through the streets, and did not think about returning till a thunderstorm suddenly burst over the town. Then, to my horror, I could not find my way back, nor could I inquire the way, for I had neglected to take note of the name of my hotel or of the street in which it was situated. Here was a nice state of things! It was bad enough in daylight; but doubly unfortunate in the dark, in a drenching rain. After walking more than two hours here and there, I reached the outskirts of the town, and recognised the road by which I had entered. I followed as exactly as I could the way I had ridden; but in the darkness this was not easy. However, the plan was successful; but I had learnt a lesson I am never likely to forget.

I was greatly amused one morning, after a night spent at a very out-of-the-way place in France, at receiving a visit from the chief of police, who said he had heard the previous night of the arrival of an Englishman. He apologised for calling at the hotel to see me, and said, 'The fact is, I am learning English. There is an English professor not far from here; but he speaks English very badly, and cannot explain many things to me. I have, therefore, taken the liberty of coming to you, and of bringing my books, as there are many difficulties I want cleared up.' I was, of course, very pleased to tell him all he wanted, to the best of my ability. He was intensely anxious to do me a favour in return, and offered to drive me all over the place if I would stay with him a day or two. I could, unfortunately, accept only a very small part of his kind offer.

A visit to a barber's, one would think, could not at any time be notable; but, on being shaved in a French village quite unknown to English tourists, I was amused at the barber exclaiming, 'This, sir, will always be a memorable day for me. I shall always treasure the memory of it as the day on which I first shaved an Englishman.'

The Italians are very kind to English cyclists—at least such was our experience; and this was especially the case in places off the beaten track. Even during an hour's stay in such a place quite a large number of the villagers came round us, all most anxious to do anything they could to make our visit pleasant. The Italians repeatedly told us how much they loved the English.

I once made a very annoying mistake in the Highlands of Scotland. According to my guide-book, there was a good hotel at the top of a very tedious ascent. When I arrived, tired, thirsty, and hungry, I found the building there, right enough; but it had no sign-board of any kind. However, as I had on one or two previous occasions been directed to hotels without sign-boards, I boldly walked into the house, entered one of the rooms, and rang the bell. A neat servant-girl made her appearance, and to her I confided that I was very hungry, and should be glad of a good dinner as quickly as possible. She said she would go and consult her mistress, and returned in a few minutes saying that her mistress was very sorry that they had not much food in the house, but that I was welcome to the best they could give me. Then she added, 'Please, sir, do you know that this is a private house? The first hotel on this road is five miles farther on.' I waited to hear no more; and, hurriedly apologising, I slunk away, mounted my bicycle, and put enough energy into the machine for the next few miles to keep me from thinking.

The last incident I shall mention took place in England. One day I had stopped at a bicycle-shop to buy oil; and, as no one came into the shop to serve me, I amused myself for some minutes examining the various bicycles. Suddenly a carriage drove up to the door, containing a military-looking gentleman and a pretty girl, evidently his daughter. He called out to me, directly I looked up, 'Come here, sir.' At first I did not think he could be calling for me, so I resumed my investigation of the cycles. Then he called louder and more angrily than before, 'Come here, sir, at once! I want you.' This was rather too much for me, so I took no notice, thinking that would show him I was not the owner of the shop. After a little while, however, he leaped down from the carriage, rushed into the shop, and demanded, 'Why did you not come when I called you? Don't you want any orders?' His tone was so aggressive and his manner so exasperating that I could not help exclaiming, 'No, sir. I don't want any orders from you.' 'That's a nice way of doing business!' he shouted. 'Why have you not sent the bicycle this morning as you promised?' 'I never promised to send you a bicycle,' I retorted. 'In fact, I have never, to the best of my knowledge, seen you before.' 'Then you are a fine sort of business man,' he yelled. 'If it was not you, it was one of your men I gave the order to, and surely you know by the order-book exactly what is ordered and what is not.' 'No,' I quietly replied, 'I have not seen the order-book, and it is a matter of supreme indifference to me whether you gave an order or not.' Even then he did not see that I was, like himself, only a customer, for he screamed out, 'I have a good

mind to leave your shop.' I thought it was now getting high time to clear up the mystery, so, after he had made a few more cutting remarks, which I listened to patiently, I explained my position to him. It so happened, however, just at that moment, that his horse became restive and started to run away with the carriage and

its pretty occupant. In less time than it takes to tell I rushed out of the shop, and had the great pleasure and satisfaction of preventing what might have been a serious accident. Thus reconciliation was made; and since that time the old gentleman and his family have been among my best friends.

## ARRECIFOS.

### CHAPTER VII.—'ALLA GOODA COMRADE.'



UST before breakfast on the following morning, and when a thick tropic mist lay low and heavy upon the waters of the lagoon, Barradas, who was walking the poop, heard the sound of oars, and called the captain. Rawlings came up from below as the boat got alongside, and Barry jumped on deck.

'Well, Mr Barry,' he said pleasantly, 'you are back sooner than I expected. What news?'

'Bad, sir; yet not so bad as it might have been. We were attacked by the natives, who seem to be well armed, for they kept up a constant fire on the boat till we were out of range. She was struck in a dozen places, but fortunately none of us was hit.'

'Curse them!' said Rawlings, with a savage oath; 'are they going to stop us from diving?'

'Oh no! I don't think they will trouble us in that way. If they do we can easily beat them off. But there's not much chance of their letting us land on the big island and making that our headquarters.'

'Then what shall we do?' asked Rawlings, chewing his cigar and angrily pacing the deck.

'Stay where we are and work the lagoon from this end,' replied the mate. 'We have three months' work here, within as many miles of us; and I believe we can fill the ship about here, without going near the lee side of the lagoon. Yesterday afternoon we could see the shell lying on the bottom anywhere in from four to six fathoms.' (This part of Barry's story was quite true.) 'And that low, sandy island astern of us will do splendidly for a rotting-out station. Our boys will soon put up some coco-nut-leaf houses. It's handy, too—almost within hailing distance of the ship.'

Rawlings's equanimity was at once restored. 'Ah! that is good news—about the shell, anyway. Ready for breakfast, Mr Barry?'

During breakfast Barry, with a secret delight at the fiction, gave Rawlings, Barradas, and the Greek an account of the manner in which he and his men were attacked. The Greek, who had been examining the boat, and who would have the job of repairing the damage done by the bullets of the savages—fired at the boat by Joe and Velo when she was empty—suggested to Raw-

lings that, later on, the whole crew should make a night-attack on the native village, and, as he expressed it, 'wipa outa the whole lota of the — nigga.'

'What's the use of our doing that?' said Barradas gloomily. 'As long as they don't interfere with us again we may as well leave them alone.'

The Greek snapped his jaws together like a shark, and then grinned. 'I tella you the trutha; I would as soona shoota a Kanaka as I would shoota a rat.'

'Then you had better keep that to yourself,' said Barry pointedly. 'If these Kanaka sailors of ours heard you say that, they would turn rusty on us and cause a lot of trouble.'

'Quite true, Mr Barry,' said Rawlings suavely; 'but Paul doesn't mean altogether what he says.'

The Greek was about to make an angry protest when he met a glance from the captain's eye, vicious, angry, and warning.

However, Barry was making his points, and was keenly observant. 'I may as well tell you all,' he said with apparent bluntness, looking at each of the three in turn, 'that if I am to have these men turned over to me when we begin diving, I won't have any interference. If you, Paul, and you, Barradas, begin to knock them about when I'm boss of them—as you have done hitherto—they'll bolt, every man-Jack of them; and, besides that, I won't have it.'

'I'll see that you have no interference, Mr Barry,' said Rawlings quickly; 'and I am sure that Mr Barradas and Paul will bear in mind what you say.'

'I won't meddle with the men under your charge, Mr Barry,' said Barradas. 'I know my duty, and don't want to be told about it.' He spoke sullenly, but more at the captain than to Barry.

'Of course nota,' broke in the Greek, with an amiable smile. 'Of course we will nota meddla with the men. We are alla gooda comrade, thanka the gooda Goda.'

For a moment or two a wild desire to seize the treacherous scoundrel by the throat possessed Barry; but, fearful of betraying himself, he rose and went on deck.

In the afternoon the brig was brought in close



under the islet, the sails were unbent, and some of the deserted houses occupied by the native divers. At Barry's request, Joe was appointed overseer, and was to live on shore with them. The islet itself was not more than two miles in length, and was connected with the next one by a reef which was dry at low-water; and, in fact, the whole of the thirteen islands were joined to each other except where the deep-water passage into the lagoon broke the continuity. It was, therefore, possible, at low-water, to walk from the south-east islet, which the natives called Ujilong, to the big island visited the previous day by Barry, and which—so Mrs Tracey told him—was named Tebuan. The intervening islands were, like Ujilong, uninhabited, though on all of them houses were standing; they had all been deserted after the raid made on Ujilong village, and the inhabitants had fled to the security afforded them by the dense jungle on Tebuan.

Work was begun on the following morning by Barry with the two boats, each carrying a crew of six men. Before sunset, so plentiful was the pearl-shell, and so easily obtainable—for the depth of water ran but from four to six fathoms—that more than half-a-ton was brought to the low, sandy islet, ready for Rawlings and Barradas in the morning.

Day after day the work continued, the native divers exerting themselves to the utmost to obtain as much shell as possible, while Rawlings, the second mate, and the boatswain searched every bivalve for pearls, cleaned and then packed the shell into boxes, and stowed it into the hold.

At the end of the first week six tons of shell were in the hold of the *Mahina*; and although no pearls of any great size had been found, many hundreds, ranging in value from ten pounds downwards, and a vast number of 'seed' pearls as well, were shown to Barry by Rawlings as the result of the week's work.

'Of course, Barry,' said Rawlings genially, 'I intend, as I said before, to let you stand in with me. I quite recognise that you are something more to me than a mere chief-officer at fifteen pounds a month. You are doing all the hard work, and are entitled to share in my good luck.'

'And I, as I have told you, Captain Rawlings, do not want anything more than that to which I am entitled,' replied Barry quietly. 'I am anxious—most anxious—to see the *Mahina* with a full cargo under her hatches.'

'And that will be accomplished within four months, Mr Barry, at the rate we are going on at now,' said Rawlings, with his usual sweet smile. 'The men seem to be working uncommonly well under your supervision.'

'They are working very hard indeed; and I think I can get them to continue at it until the brig is filled. But now and then we must give them a few days' liberty.'

'Certainly, Mr Barry,' replied the captain affably; and then, motioning his chief-officer to a seat, and calling the steward to bring the spirit-stand, he offered his cigar-case to his officer.

'Let us take a quiet little drink and a smoke, Mr Barry. Now, tell me—what do you think the past week's work amounts to? You are an experienced man in the pearling business; I have no practical knowledge myself.'

'I think that the shell we have obtained so far will bring over a thousand to fifteen hundred pounds in Singapore or Hong-kong, and the pearls you have shown me will certainly bring another thousand; in London you would get fifteen hundred for them.'

Rawlings's eyes sparkled. 'Then, in fact, as we are going on now, we are getting shell and pearls to the value of, say, two thousand pounds a week, at least?'

'Yes, about that,' answered Barry carelessly; 'but I dare say that when we get on to the big six-fathom bed in the middle of the lagoon—which I am leaving until we have worked out those near by—we can count on getting about three thousand pounds' worth of shell and pearls every week for three or four or five months at the very least. I have never seen such rich patches in all my experience, and I shall not be surprised if we get some very fine pearls. For instance, I can point you out two or three shells now in the boats, all of which, I think by their appearance, will contain big pearls.'

Stepping to the rail, he called out to Velo, 'Pass up those three big shells, Velo.'

Barradas and the Greek joined them, and watched the shells being opened. The first contained two fairly large pearls, but their value was greatly discounted by their irregular shape; yet even these were worth thirty pounds or thirty-five pounds each; the remaining two were then opened, and an eager 'Ah! ah!' of delight burst from Rawlings when there was revealed in each a pearl of exquisite beauty and shape, and of great size.

'In Tahiti a local buyer would offer you a hundred pounds each for pearls such as these,' said Barry as, after wiping them with his handkerchief, he handed them over to the captain; 'in Auckland or Singapore you would be offered more.' Then, apparently no longer interested in the subject, he went to his cabin to change his clothes for supper.

On the following Saturday—ten days after diving operations had commenced—the men, at Barry's request, were given three full days' liberty. Some of them wanted to make a fishing excursion, others to hunt for robber-crabs at night-time on the adjoining islets; others to attend to the *puraka*\* plantations of the de-

\* A gigantic species of the tuber called *taro* by the Polynesians (*Arum esculentum*).

sented village. And as Barry himself hoped, he said, that he might shoot a wild-pig or two, he decided to remain on shore with the men until the following Monday.

Rawlings, whose whole soul was in the work of searching for pearls, did not offer to join him, much to Barry's satisfaction, for he had a certain object in view. He had taken possession of the best of the native houses in the deserted village, and Joe and Velo had put it in good order, and were to share it with him at night.

At sunset Barry and his men left the brig and rowed ashore; and, as soon as they landed, the natives, at a word from Velo, lopped off the lateral branches of a tall pandanus palm, and, collecting numbers of fallen and dried coco-palm branches, built them into a pyramidal shape from the foot of the tree to its top.

'Light it,' said Barry.

Velo struck a match and applied it to the base of the pyramid. In an instant it flared up, and in a few minutes a great pillar of fire was roaring and crackling, and sending showers of sparks high in the air, and lighting up the shore and lagoon for a mile around.

Rawlings and the others, who were examining pearls under cover of the poop awning by the aid of half-a-dozen lanterns, took but little notice.

'They mean to enjoy themselves to-night,' said Rawlings. 'Well, they deserve to. They are working well.'

'Yes, sir,' said the native steward respectfully, as he placed a bottle of brandy and glasses on the skylight. 'Those men they tell me to-day that they would make a big fire to-night, because they have liberty. That is native fashion, sir.'

'Ah! I see,' said Rawlings, carelessly dropping another pearl into a cigar-box which was placed between himself and the others.

As soon as the fire had burnt out, and only the faintly glowing bole of the pandanus palm remained, Barry, accompanied by Velo and Joe, set out along the beach towards the chain of islets trending north and westward. Both Velo and Joe carried bundles on their shoulders, in addition to their rifles and ammunition, and as they walked they talked freely with their officer.

'You are sure that Mrs Tracey would see that ere fire, sir?' inquired Joe.

'Certain, Joe. The reflection could be seen forty miles away, and Tebuan is only twenty. The island at which we are to meet is only fifteen miles from here along the beach and reefs, and if she started as soon as we did, we should meet her there long before midnight.'

The seaman chuckled. 'The poor lady will be mighty pleased to see us again, sir—won't she? I do 'ope, sir, as how it won't be long before we settles up with them bloody-minded pirates.'

'Not until the brig is full of pearl-shell, Joe. Then we shall act—swiftly and suddenly. You have been careful not to let your three mates know anything, I hope?'

'Not I, sir,' answered the seaman earnestly. 'Not a word will I say until you give me the word to do so. And they will stand by us, sir, never fear, for they all likes you; and Sam Button and Sharkey' (two of the four white sailors) 'want very bad to be let come in the boats with us.'

'We must be careful as yet, Joe,' replied Barry. 'I have no doubt that Sam and Sharkey and Peter will help us when the time comes; but I don't want to raise any suspicion. We must keep this business dark from them until the time does come to act.'

'Ay, ay, sir,' assented the sailor; 'and even if they sided with the skipper, we needn't have no cause to fear. The natives is with you to a man, sir. I can see that easy enough; they just follows you with their eyes like a dog does its master.'

Barry nodded and smiled contentedly. The native crew were, he knew, devoted to him, and could be relied on to preserve the secrecy so essential to the fulfilment of the plans he had in view.

The tide was falling fast, and the connecting reef between the islands was dry, so that Barry and his two companions had no trouble in crossing from one to the other. For nearly three hours they marched on in silence, sometimes along the hard white sand of the inner lagoon beach, sometimes along narrow paths running parallel with the outer iron-bound coast, where the slow-sweeping billows curled themselves, to break with a sound like muffled thunder upon the black wall of reef fringing the silent shore. At midnight they reached a little island of not more than a mile in length and half a mile in width. In the clear starlight night they saw the figures of six persons coming towards them on the beach.

Barry struck a match, held it aloft for an instant, and then called out, 'Are you there, Mrs Tracey?'

'I am here, Mr Barry;' and, followed by three stalwart men and the two young women who had formerly accompanied her at their first meeting, Mrs Tracey, although still lame, hastened to him and shook his hand warmly.

'We started immediately we saw your fire,' she said, 'but came across the lagoon in canoes, instead of walking. Now, come with me. There are several empty houses here, just over the brow of the beach; and in one of them there is a midnight supper for us all—crayfish, baked fish, pork, and chickens, and young coco-nuts to drink.'

The two native women leading the way, the whole party soon gained the houses, which stood in a thick grove of giant jackfruit-trees. A bright fire was blazing in the open, and spread

out on the matted floor of the best of the houses was the midnight supper.

'We are quite safe here,' said Mrs Tracey as she bade Barry be seated; 'this fire cannot be seen from the ship—can it?'

'No,' answered the mate; 'and I took care to let Rawlings know that I would let some of the men come down as far as the middle island to hunt and fish. So, even if he does see the fire, he will conclude it has been lit by them. Now, tell me, are you well?'

'Well indeed; and happier, far happier, than I have been for long, long months. I was overjoyed to see your signal, and to know that all was going well, and that I should see you to-night. Now let me bring my native friends to shake hands with you. The two girls, Pani and Toea, you have seen before; the men are my bodyguard.'

'And a fine bodyguard they are,' said Barry as he shook hands with the men, who then, with smiling and interested faces, sat down at the farther end of the house with Velo, Joe, and the two women.

'I have brought you some things which will be useful. In one bundle are provisions—all the best delicacies that the steward and I could find, and tea, coffee, sugar, and condensed milk. I did not even forget a teapot.'

'How kind of you!' she said. 'The little provisions the captain of the *Golden City* gave me are quite exhausted. Oh! do let me make some tea now. There is a native well here among the jackfruit-trees, with good water.'

'The other bundle contains calicoes, prints, and all that sort of gear, with two pairs of canvas shoes—the smallest I could get. You mustn't cut your feet again, you know.'

'How thoughtful you are!' she said, touching his hand gently. Then she asked artlessly, 'Are you married, Mr Barry?'

'No; but I hope to be when we return to Sydney. I'll tell you the story by-and-by, Mrs Tracey, if you care to hear it.'

'Of course I shall,' she said brightly; 'and I shall see her too—shan't I?'

'I hope so,' answered Barry, with a smile. 'But we shall have a long spell here yet before we can settle up matters with Rawlings and the others—three months at least.'

'That will soon pass. Now let me see about the tea, and then we'll have a long talk. You'll stay all night—won't you?'

'And all to-morrow as well. The men have three days' liberty, and Rawlings thinks I am going pig-hunting to-morrow.'

As they ate their supper Barry told her all that had happened since he had seen her, and of the richness of the pearl-beds then being worked. 'There is no fear,' he added, 'of Rawlings coming to Tebuan. That idea of mine of firing at our boat was a happy one; and although Joe here is

the only white sailor in the secret, the other three on board will stand to us when the time arrives. As for the native crew, they have sworn to help us; and when I am out with them in the boats they often laugh at the way we are fooling the captain. I have promised them, on your behalf, a hundred dollars each as a bonus when we reach either Sydney or Singapore.'

'You think of everything, Mr Barry,' she said gratefully. 'Now let me tell you that I too have been working. Every day since I saw you the Tebuan people have been diving for me, and I think we must have quite two or three tons of shell. The pearls we have found I brought with me to show you. There is a coco-nut shell nearly half-full—some are simply lovely. And now I think of it, I won't show them to you; I shall keep them for your future wife.'

That was indeed a happy night for Barry, Mrs Tracey, and their native friends. No one cared to sleep, for there was much to be talked of and plans arranged for future meetings. Once every week Mrs Tracey was to await Barry and Velo at the little island, and each party was to report progress.

Early in the morning Velo, Joe, and Barry set out on a pig-hunt, accompanied by the three male natives from Tebuan, leaving Mrs Tracey to 'keep house,' as she called it, on the little island, and look over the treasures brought to her from the ship.

Late in the afternoon the hunters returned with their spoil—three gaunt, fierce-looking wild-pigs; and then, after a meal had been cooked and eaten, the white man and woman bade each other good-bye for another week.

#### THE SUMMER WIND.

THE breezes come, the breezes pass,  
And up the glen they run, revealed  
Against an overflowing field  
Of gleaming undulating grass.

Like benedictions on the earth,  
Like blessings on the summer day,  
They make a soul more glad than gay,  
And wake a joy more deep than mirth.


The troubles of the town increase;  
But here there is no stir nor strife,  
And here 'tis good to bring a life  
To be persuaded back to peace.

I wish the year contained a day  
When none should suffer, die, or weep:  
One rest for all upon the steep,  
One well for all beside the way.

The town is very tired. Alas!  
Its thin smile cannot mask its pain;  
And they are rich enough who gain  
Cool breezes and a couch of grass.

J. J. BELL.





# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### 'JEROME' OF NOVA SCOTIA.

#### A FORTY YEARS' SEA MYSTERY.

**F**INANCIAL Returns,' one of the Blue-books issued by the legislature of Nova Scotia, contains a very brief entry, the story of which is perhaps unique in the annals of public documents. It is simply the one line :

Jerome.....\$104.00

But behind it lies one of the strangest of mysteries—a sea mystery that, after the lapse of more than four decades, is still as impenetrable as it was on the day that gave it birth.

Who is 'Jerome'? No one knows. Whence came he? None can even guess. Why should his name appear in a Government Blue-book as receiving an annual amount from the country to which he never rendered a cent's-worth of service? Few can tell. Scarcely any of the members of the legislature know to what the entry refers; it has figured in the 'Financial Returns' for many years; it was there before the several provinces of Canada were welded into the present Dominion; it was there when Nova Scotia was a separate colony. In themselves these facts may not present anything that is particularly remarkable; but when taken in conjunction with 'Jerome's' strange desertion on the shores of the Land of Evangeline, and the impenetrable mystery that has ever since surrounded his identity, as well as his extraordinary demeanour, the matter may well take rank with any of the obscure cases that history records.

Some forty-two years ago the people living around Digby Neck—the narrow strip of land on the eastern side of the Bay of Fundy—one day sighted a ship in the offing whose movements were unusual; she seemed to be hovering aimlessly around the same spot; and when darkness fell she was still there. Her peculiar tacking was the subject of much comment among the fisher-folk, the only residents along that rugged coast. Next morning, when they turned their eyes seaward, the vessel had disappeared; but upon the beach were a small keg of water and a bag of

ship-biscuits, and by the side of them was a man, or, rather, what was left of one, for his legs had been cut off above the knees. The amputation had been recently done, and that it was the work of a skilful hand was demonstrated by the careful manner in which the raw stumps were bandaged.

The stranger was apparently about nineteen years of age, with flaxen hair and blue eyes; and from his clothing and delicate white skin it was inferred that he had been well brought up. He was nursed and cared for by one of the cottagers, and gradually recovered from the severe operation to which he had been subjected. But he was morose and silent; and his speech, if speech it could be called, consisted only of guttural sounds that none could understand, though efforts were made by many seafaring men who had a smattering of foreign tongues to ascertain his nationality. There was not a scrap of paper of any kind upon him to give the faintest clue to his identity; nor were there any marks on his clothing, which was of the best, to throw any light either upon his name or from whence he came. Whether, after his strange arrival on the shores of Nova Scotia, any attempt was made to teach him an intelligible language is not known; but certain it is that during the long period he has passed among the humble residents of Digby Neck he has not acquired their tongue, and he has never by speech conveyed as much as a single thought to any one.

The manner of his arrival was mysterious; he has remained a mystery ever since. For forty-two years he has been a man without a name, except that of 'Jerome,' which was given him by some of the fishermen who thought that one of the sounds he uttered resembled that word.

It was all very well for the poor people of the district to be hospitable towards the helpless cripple for a while; but it was difficult for them to earn a livelihood for themselves; and when they felt that they could no longer be burdened with his support, they applied to the Poor Com-

missioners to have the weight taken off their shoulders. But the appeal was in vain: the Commissioners did not see why they should take over the responsibility; 'Jerome' did not belong to Digby County. The aid of the legislature was then sought, and, pending investigation, it granted an allowance of one hundred and four dollars. That was 'Jerome's' first connection with the Blue-books of the province; and from that time to the present his name has regularly appeared on the pages of 'Financial Returns;' for investigation unravelled nothing of the mystery, and the legislature has continued the grant from year to year ever since.

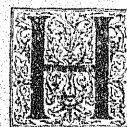
Before the advent of the railway, 'Jerome' was an object of much interest to passengers by coach, who would observe him basking in the summer sun, and would stop to see him and inquire into his case. But eventually they got so accustomed to the sight and to the story that they contented themselves with simply acknowledging him by a wave of the hand as they passed. With the waning of interest and curiosity on the part of the public, together with the construction of the railway—which, unlike the old post-road, does not run near the shore of that locality—'Jerome' and

his strange story are now almost forgotten except by those in the immediate neighbourhood of Saunnierville, on the shores of the bay where he was landed, and where the women still adhere to the simple garb of the old Acadians, and the language spoken is that of the peasants of Normandy and Brittany in the time of Louis Quatorze.

'Jerome,' during the hot days of summer, still basks in the sun in front of the house where he lives with a French-Acadian family, and in winter he huddles close beside the stove. He partakes of such food as is placed before him; but he is still the same silent, morose person that he was when first discovered on the beach forty-two years ago. He keeps by himself as much as possible, and simply passes his days much after the manner of the beasts of the field. For more than four decades his early history has been as impenetrable as was that of the Man with the Iron Mask; and it is scarcely within the range of probability that the veil will now be torn aside. 'Jerome' is indeed a mystery, and in all likelihood he will go down to his grave without any one being able to even hazard a conjecture as to his identity.

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

### CHAPTER IX.—AN INARTISTIC REPLY.



HERE, then, was the position: Mademoiselle was in dire distress through her brother's trouble, and was being urged or persuaded in various directions by the interested parties in the Château. Of these, the most dangerous, probably—certainly the most offensive from my point of view—was Colonel Lepard. If Roussel's indiscreet words meant anything at all, they meant that Lepard knew all about the Gaston des Comptes affair, if indeed he had not actually taken a part in bringing it about. Such knowledge, in the possession of such a man, and with such an object in view as mademoiselle and her fortune, was a thing to be feared. The Church, as represented by the Abbé Dienfoy and the lady who had arrived the previous day, might be trusted to fight valiantly for the prize they coveted; and mademoiselle was at all events safe in their hands.

The object of Roussel's appearance on the scene I could not imagine.

Vaurel and myself were the only disinterested parties in this many-sided conflict; we were practically outsiders, and had no standing in the matter beyond our keen desire to be of assistance to mademoiselle. I might perhaps even have taken exception, had I been so inclined, to my own complete disinterestedness; at all events, I had but one wish, and that was for made-

moiselle's good, and I doubt if as much could have been said of any of the others.

It was galling to be unable to do more than quietly wait and watch. However, as there was nothing else possible, I was fain to possess my soul in such patience as I could muster, and hope for some turn of events which might give me an active hand in the game.

Meanwhile the quiet life of the woods in Vaurel's company was restful and enjoyable, and I fished and smoked and accompanied him on his patrols, watched the Château, and waited for the wheel to turn. Vaurel and I went up to Mère Thibaud's for dinner each night; but Roussel showed a natural lack of appreciation of our company, and generally managed to dine before or after us. If by chance we overlapped one another at table, he nodded coldly to me, took no notice of Vaurel, and kept as much space between himself and us as possible. Why he kept hanging about was quite beyond us. More than once we caught a distant sight of him wandering about the woods, and more than once we were aroused in the night by angry demonstrations on the part of Boulot, who heard or dreamt of intruders. More than once I warned Vaurel to keep a sharp eye all about him, for I distrusted the artist entirely, and he did not strike me as at all the kind of man to take a blow without attempting a blow in return; but Vaurel only laughed

in his big hearty way, and promised to crack M. Roussel across his knee with one hand if he only gave him the chance.

It happened, however, that one day after breakfast we found ourselves entirely out of tobacco, and Boulot and I strolled up to the shop in the village for a supply of such as they had. Boulot never missed an opportunity of a village ramble with me, since his master objected to his going alone. It afforded him the double pleasure of scaring all the children he met, and of getting away from the sight and smell of the water for a brief space; and the massive and imperturbable gravity with which he trotted along, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left, scattering the women and children without ever deigning to cast a look upon them, always amused me greatly. We delighted the old dame's heart by carrying off all her minute stock of really smokable stuff, and resumed our triumphant progress through the village.

We strolled quietly along till we reached the top of the path that led down through the trees to the river, and commenced the descent, our feet making no sound on the carpet of fallen leaves. Boulot trotted on in front, and as he rounded the corner of the house I saw his ears stand suddenly upright, and he bristled all over. I heard a heavy splash in the water, and a surprised yell cut off short in the middle. Boulot's short tail stiffened like an iron spike, the stout hind-legs spurned the earth, and he launched himself at something in front. I got round just in time to see him fasten on Roussel's throat with a muffled howl, then dog and man went over backwards into the water, and Boulot gave a disgusted snort as they went under. A dozen feet farther out Vaurel rose with a choking cry and began thrashing the water helplessly with his one arm; and as I saw he was like to drown, I leaped in and made my way to him, leaving Boulot and Roussel to settle their quarrel as best they could.

Vaurel grabbed me spasmodically, and I shouted into his ear, 'Lie still. You're all right. I can swim like a fish. Let go, man, or you'll drown both of us.'

I got him by the back of the neck at last, and held his head above water, then swam with the current and gradually edged him in to the bank, and at last our feet touched bottom and we crawled ashore. Vaurel sat coughing and choking with the water he had swallowed, while I looked anxiously for the other two, and presently downstream in the direction of the weir I saw a black object rolling helplessly along: it was Master Boulot or his body. Of Roussel I could see nothing. I sped along the bank. If there was any spark of life in the old dog, he would have no chance if the undertow got hold of him. I got below Boulot, and swam out and managed to lay hold of him just in time. He seemed to be dead, but I dragged him ashore. While I sat

panting on the bank I held him upside down, pressed the water out of him, worked him like a pair of bellows, and blew the water out of his nose. There were pieces of a collar and necktie between his teeth, and I could not get them out. I worked away on first-aid lines, for I was loath to let the plucky old fellow slip away if there was any possible hope of his recovery. I made another attempt to pull the plunder from between his teeth, and was at length cheered by a vicious snap after a bit of the tie as I tore it away. Then he opened one eye, heaved a big sigh, and sneezed; and when I put him on to his feet he lay down and was very sick. I let him cough the water out till he could cough no more, and then picked him up, snuffling and snorting, and carried him home in my arms.

Vaurel was lying on the bank where we landed, still coughing up the water he had swallowed.

'Dead!' he asked as I came up with Boulot.

'No, he's coming round; but it was a pretty close shave.'

'What was it? What happened?'

'Do you really mean to say you don't know?' I asked.

'I know nothing. I had thrown out a line to pass the time, and was sitting on my heels watching it, when an earthquake struck me in the back, and then I seemed to be trying to swallow the river. Seems to me I must have been dozing.'

'It was that rascal Roussel. Boulot and I saw him heave you into the water, but we were too late to stop him. Boulot got him by the throat, and they tumbled in after you. I wonder where he's got to. Have you seen anything of him?'

'*Peste!* No,' he said, getting up. 'I didn't know he was there. The miserable! to sneak on a man like that. But if Boulot got his teeth in he's finished; and but for you, monsieur, Boulot and I should be finished too.' He gripped my hand and shook it heartily.

The miller in a white blouse, with his face and beard thick with flour-dust, came along the river-bank with one of his men to ask what the trouble had been; and, on our telling him, sent off his man to the village to inform M. Juliot the gendarme, so that everything might be in order. Then he hurried back to shut down one of his sluice-gates which had been open, so that, if the body of the artist had not yet got through, it might be the more easily found.

Presently Juliot came majestically down the wood-path with half the village at his heels. It was evident that he did not often get such a chance as this of distinguishing himself, and he made the most of it. He questioned us magisterially and made notes in his pocket-book. He looked at Boulot, who was lying on my bed, the centre of a widening damp spot. But Boulot



had had too much water to take any interest in gendarmes. He only wrinkled up his brows and his nose and snuffled disgustedly and curled himself up the tighter, and Juliot decided not to press investigations in that quarter.

Then a party crossed in the punt to the other bank, and we all set off with sticks and poles to search for the body. But it was not to be found; and after poking and rooting above the weir for more than an hour, the searchers streamed away down the river in a long straggling tail, and in time came straggling back as empty as they went.

Mère Thi baud had a full house that night, and nothing was talked of but the crazy artist's attempt on Prudent Vaurel. Boulot sat under his master's chair and received the distant homage of the villagers with dignified contempt, sneezing and snuffling at intervals as though the recollection of his cold plunge was still heavy on him.

The villagers decided that the artist was undoubtedly dead, and that it served him right. The body would rise in time, and that would be the end of it. They had never liked him. He was too stuck-up, and treated them as if they were dirt.

M. Juliot, as the representative of law and order, was in great form and very much in evidence. He condescended to take coffee and fine cognac with us, and discussed the case didactically. He was of opinion that something ought to be done, and was half-inclined to think that, failing the prosecution of Roussel—for the best of

reasons—for assaulting Vaurel, Boulot ought to be proceeded against in some way or other for assaulting Roussel. It was insufferable that the whole village should be terrorised by the great animal. 'Why, it was only a week or two since he killed the sheep-dog up at La Garaye, and next week it might be any one of them. *Dieu!* yes, it might be me myself, Juliot of the gendarmerie.'

'All right, you take him along, Juliot, my friend,' said Vaurel complacently. 'Here he is, quiet as a lamb; just take him right along and lock him up, and God help you in the doing of it, for nobody else will, and you'll want all the help you can get.'

'It's a veritable devil,' said Juliot, looking askance at Boulot, but not offering to touch him. 'When he's killed somebody else, M. Vaurel, you'll regret it; but then it'll be too late.'

'You leave Boulot alone, Juliot, and Boulot will leave you alone. If that fool of a sheep-dog hadn't flown at him he'd have been alive now; and if the crazy artist hadn't flown at me he'd have been alive now. It's just a bit dangerous to touch either of us—isn't it, old boy?' said Boulot's master, pulling one of his ears till his great white fangs showed and made the crowd shiver.

M. Juliot helped himself to some more cognac, and expressed his feelings in a loud '*Eh, bien!*' which no doubt covered many unexpressed thoughts on the subject, and then relapsed into silence profound if not eloquent.

## ORANGE-CULTURE IN SOUTH CALIFORNIA.

By D. WINGATE.

**T**HE culture of the orange-tree has greatly increased in South California within the last few years, despite the many difficulties the growers have had to contend with. Florida was once the largest orange-producing State in the Union; Riverside, a county in South California, is now the largest orange-producing district in the world. Even Covina, a comparatively new orange-section, also in South California, last season (1899) shipped one hundred thousand boxes more than the whole State of Florida. Given suitable soil and plenty of sunshine, irrigation and cultivation have done the rest; and the result to-day is thousands of acres of beautiful trees in bearing, averaging about a hundred trees to the acre.

The celebrated 'seedless navel orange,' first produced in Riverside, practically gave South California its world-wide reputation for orange-growing; and this orange has completely thrown into the shade other varieties—such as Mediterranean sweet, Valencia, ruby and Malta bloods, St Michael's, and others less known. Growers

have discovered that, for size, flavour, and steady bearing, no other orange can compete with it.

The first year of the orange-tree's life in the orchard is a most critical period in its existence, because it has just been transplanted from the nursery, in which, during its growth for three or four years from the seed, it has been carefully nurtured, and is then worth from fifty cents to one dollar—that is, two to four shillings. The young trees are planted in the orchard in rows accurately measured off, eighteen by twenty feet apart.

The Washington navel orange-tree fruits the first year in the orchard, but it is only said to be in bearing the third year; and from that time it must be fed and watered with the greatest care if, at the age of twelve years, it is to produce seven or eight hundred pounds of fruit. Many of the most successful groves are of comparatively old growth, planted some twenty-two to twenty-five years ago; but the health and productiveness of these trees have been maintained by the generous expenditure of fertilisers—often amounting from a ton to a ton and a half to the acre, consisting of guano with necessary proportion

of potash and sulphate of iron—and also by the regular irrigation in summer every thirty days, and by incessant cultivation or breaking up of the soil, which is so apt to become baked by the sun. In the first instance the virgin soil is extremely fertile, but it cannot be drawn upon year after year with impunity; and the pioneers discovered this, to their loss, when the decadence of their orange-trees became evident. Young orchards pay while the soil is virgin; but it is no economy to spare either water or manure after the first year or two of bearing, if the orchardist wishes his trees to maintain their productiveness. Some growers state that slight blemishes on oranges denote too rich feeding of the trees; but I believe this opinion is held only by a minority.

The grower has practically nothing further to do with the oranges after they leave his orchard; the sorting, cleaning, grading, and final packing for the market are in the hands of the association packing-houses—unless, of course, the grower himself has been able to establish a brand and a packing-house of his own. Usually the grower is supplied with boxes by the association, and into them the oranges are loosely packed by his pickers, piled up on wagons, and taken into the packing-house. There the teamster receives a cheque or credit note for the owner, and these are kept three or four months, and used to check the amount then receivable from the association. The price depends upon the kind of season, and also upon the grade of orange, and runs from about ninety cents or one dollar up to two dollars fifty cents a box, the average being one dollar fifteen cents.

The first process at the packing-house is to weigh the fruit, and label it with the name of the owner, then put it aside for the brushers. In large houses the brushing is done by a machine; in smaller houses by boys and girls, who use small hand-brushes. Generally the packing-machine is conveniently placed so that the oranges roll down an incline to the sorters' table. Here imperfections only are noted, the quick and critical eye of the sorter rapidly rejecting the 'culls,' as they are called—namely, those oranges even slightly discoloured or blemished. Great piles of these 'culls' may be seen in labelled bins ready to be sold to the peddler for ten, twenty-five, or even fifty cents a box; if totally unsaleable they are returned to the owner, and scattered over the orchard and ploughed in as a fertiliser. The next process is that of grading, by which the oranges are sorted according to size. The grader is a somewhat intricate machine. From the hopper at one end, the oranges roll down an incline by the side of a revolving cylinder, along each side of which are two long slits widening towards the bottom, each size falling through its own special chute into a box below. The three grades of marketable oranges are the fancy, the choice, and the standard. After being graded, the oranges next come into the

hands of the packers, who are marvellously dexterous in their handling. They stand in front of the box to be packed, with the bin of oranges on the right and a bunch of tissue-paper wrappers on the left. Swiftly the right hand takes an orange, simultaneously the left hand seizes a wrapper, a sound of crumpled paper, and—hey, presto!—the orange is in the box. The last layer is left slightly protruding above the side of the box; over this are nailed three or four thin laths, with a space between so that the air may have free access; and from the nailer the box goes direct to the railroad-car. Many houses have a siding to the warehouse door. About three hundred and sixty-one boxes, weighing thirteen tons, are piled carefully into a car; the car is then sealed up, ventilators only being open; a large ticket is tacked to the side to tell where the fruit came from; and at last the oranges are ready for the swift freight-train to carry them eastward.

The packing-houses are extremely interesting, and in many instances have cost from ten thousand dollars to fifteen thousand dollars each, being equipped with the latest machinery, run by electricity, gasoline, or steam-power.

Quoting from the Annual Midwinter Number of the *Los Angeles Times*: 'Last spring the assessment returned 2,072,417 bearing orange-trees and 1,227,397 trees in their first year's growth. These citrus-trees produced in 1897, in car-loads of 336 boxes each, 7550; 15,152 car-loads in 1898, and 10,350 car-loads in 1899. The value of the output of 1899 is given by the Chamber of Commerce as 7,000,000 dollars.'

Lemons are always included in these assessments, as the railroad lines make no difference between the two shipments when reporting for the trade; as a rule the shipment of oranges is nearly double that of lemons. To the uninitiated there is little difference at a first glance between an orange orchard and a lemon orchard: there is the same precision in planting, the same glossy leaves, the same fragrant white blossom; but, unlike the orange, rarely does one see the lemon in its yellow rind, for it is picked green, and thus the tree is divested of its beauty, for the green lemon is an insignificant object. Latterly the orange, owing to the rivalry among the growers to be the first to ship oranges from California, has been gathered unripe; but these early shipments have brought so little profit to the growers that the fruit is generally allowed to remain three months longer until it is ripe and luscious for the table. Lemons are picked every month in the year; while oranges blossom in April, and the fruit ripens and is shipped from December of that year to June of the following year.

As yet nothing has been done to utilise the large number of 'culls;' but, as in France and Italy, manufactories will, no doubt, be started to obtain acids and essential oils from these 'culls' when the enormous water-power available in the

mountains, at whose feet so many orchards lie, has been fully developed.

Many difficulties have been encountered in the orange-culture of South California, of which not the least has been the white scale, an insect pest which threatened at one time the entire destruction of the orchards. Hundreds of acres were ruined; the trees seemed to be covered with snow, so greatly infected had they become. The climax was reached in 1888-89, when meetings were held by the growers, and the idea was mooted that some parasitic insect should be found to wage war upon this white scale. Half-a-dozen ladybird beetles were imported from Australia by the Agricultural Department, and liberated in an orchard; and in about a year the white scale totally disappeared. Other scales have caused trouble, but to no great extent. Fumigation is successfully resorted to, each tree being covered with a tent, inside which is liberated cyanogen gas. The fumigation is done at night to prevent decomposition of the fumes by the sunlight. It is a curious sight to see a whole orchard enveloped in these coverings, like a huge encampment on a field of battle. Frost, too, is an always expected danger, but is not experienced to the same extent as by the Florida growers, and frequently two or three years will pass without any damage being done. Wind is almost as great an enemy as frost, for the waving of the branches causes friction

between the leaves and the oranges, the latter being more or less scarred thereby. Great loss, too, is caused by the windfalls, hundreds of oranges being lost to the grower before they have come to perfection. Frost, however, may be considered an insidious enemy, and on that account is more difficult to fight, for its effects are not immediately apparent; instances have occurred in which the oranges have actually been shipped eastwards in good condition even to the eye of the grower and the packer, only to be declared unsaleable, as, on being cut open, the pulp was found almost rotten. An experiment to obviate the action of wind and frost has been tried—to house the trees collectively under one immense framework of wooden laths so placed at intervals as to admit sunlight and air, but sufficient to break the force of the wind. This scheme has been carried out successfully on the Everest Rancho, Riverside County, with such good results that the production of seventeen acres thus covered in has far exceeded that of any previous year. The more common expedient is to plant eucalyptus-trees in long rows across the general direction of the wind, thus forming a breakwind, much in the same way as the tea and coffee plants in Ceylon are protected.

Notwithstanding all drawbacks, orange-growing is a pleasant and lucrative occupation, especially when carried on in such a health-giving and equable climate as that of South California.

## ARRECIFOS.

### CHAPTER VIII.—A REPENTANCE.

**M**ORE than three months had passed away, and the shapely hull of the *Mahina* was eighteen inches deeper in the water than when she first anchored in the lagoon. During all this time fine weather had prevailed, and the boats had been constantly at work; the crews, however, being given plenty of liberty to rest and refresh themselves, by wandering about the nearer islands—fishing, pig-hunting, and bird-catching, or lying about, smoking or sleeping day or night, upon the matted floors of the houses of the little native village nestling under the grove of breadfruit-trees. In the hold of the brig tier upon tier of cases packed tightly with shell were firmly stowed for the voyage to Singapore—shell worth over eight thousand pounds; and night after night Rawlings would turn out the pearls upon the scarlet table-cloth in the cabin, and discuss their value with Barry and the other two officers.

‘Six thousand pounds, you say, Mr Barry,’ said the captain, rolling the gleaming iridescent things softly to and fro with his small, shapely brown hand, whilst the Greek drew deep sighs of pleasure as he watched.

‘At least that, sir,’ answered Barry, puffing at his pipe. ‘I have given you the lowest estimate of their value. If they bring nine thousand I shall not be surprised. As for the little box of seed-pearls—they don’t amount to much; the whole lot will not sell for more than a few hundred pounds.’

‘Poor Tracey!’ said Rawlings thoughtfully. ‘I must endeavour to find out by advertising in the London and colonial newspapers if he has any relatives. I should like to acquaint them with his death, and send them all of what would have been the poor fellow’s share, had he lived.’

Barry’s face never moved, but his right hand clenched tightly under his jumper; for Mrs Tracey had told him that her husband had informed Rawlings all about his family, and about a quiet little village called East Dene, on the coast of Sussex, where he had been born.

‘It is very generous of you,’ said Barry stolidly; ‘and if you can’t find out anything about his people, you may about those of his wife.’

‘I shall do my very best in both cases,’ replied Rawlings; ‘it will give me infinite pleasure to discover either his or his wife’s relatives.’

‘Did he leave no letters or papers which would give you a clue?’ asked Barry carelessly.



'Absolutely nothing; and although we were on the most intimate terms, he never spoke of his family; neither did his wife, poor little woman.'

The mate rose slowly from his seat. 'Good-night all. I'm going ashore to turn in. I think another fortnight will see us a full ship.'

Just as Barry had taken his seat in the dinghy and the crew were about to push her off, Barradas came to the gangway.

'I'd like to go ashore with you, Mr Barry, if you don't mind, and stretch my legs on the beach.'

'Certainly,' answered the mate coldly, as he hauled the boat alongside the ladder again. Barradas descended and took his seat beside him in silence.

For many weeks past Barry had noticed that the second-mate had sought every opportunity possible to talk to him; but he had, while being perfectly civil to him, repulsed the man's overtures. On several occasions the Spaniard, when Barry was sleeping on board, had come into his superior officer's cabin under the plea of talking about matters connected with either the ship or the boats, and each time Barry had let him see that he was not anxious for his company. In fact, he had had a hard struggle to conceal his abhorrence for the man. For the sake of the great interests at stake he endured his visits, but gave him no encouragement to talk about anything else than the ship's business; and then, with a curt 'Good-night,' the men would part, and Barradas would walk the main-deck muttering and communing to himself till dawn. Then he would resume his daily work with a sullen face and in moody silence.

The night was ablaze with the light of a glorious moon, floating in a sky of cloudless blue, as the two men stepped out of the boat and walked up to Barry's native house. Barradas was breathing quickly and heavily, and every now and then he would take a quick glance at the mate's grave, impassible face.

'Will you come in and sit down for a few minutes?' inquired Barry with cold civility.

'No, thank you;' and as the Spaniard struck a match to light his pipe, Barry saw that his swarthy face showed pale in the moonlight, and that his hand trembled. 'I don't want to keep you from your sleep. You have had a hard day's work in the boats, and I have done nothing.' He waited for a moment or two, but Barry did not repeat his invitation. With his hands in his pockets, he was gazing upon the moonlit lagoon, apparently oblivious of his subordinate's presence.

'I think I shall take a walk on the path running along the outer beach,' said Barradas presently, in an awkward, constrained manner.

Barry nodded. 'Just so. But there's nothing much to see except the graves of two of the crew of a whale-ship who were buried at the end of this island about four or five years ago. If you follow that path you'll come to the place in

about half-an-hour. Don't lose your way when you're coming back. I'll keep the boat ready for you to take you aboard again.'

Again Barradas looked at him as if he would have liked to say something more; but Barry's cold, set, and repellent face forbade it.

'Well, I think I'll go that far, anyway,' said the Spaniard; and then he added nervously, with a half-appealing look to the chief-officer: 'I suppose you're too tired for a yarn and a smoke?'

'I am,' replied Barry, with studied coolness and without moving his face.

The second-mate raised his dark and gloomy eyes and looked at him furtively; then, with something like a sigh, he turned quickly away and walked along the winding path that, through the jackfruit-grove, led to the next island.

Barry turned and watched him; and presently Velo, stripped to the waist, came out of the hut and stood beside his officer.

'Shall I follow him?' he asked in the Samoan language.

'Yes,' replied Barry quickly in the same tongue, 'follow him and see where he goeth. There may be some mischief-doing; for this man hath for many days tried to thrust himself upon me. It may be that we have been betrayed. But stay, Velo; I will come with thee.'

Entering the house, he threw off his canvas shoes, belted his Colt's revolver round his waist, and in a few minutes he and Velo were following in the track of the Spaniard. Every now and then they caught a glimpse of him in the bright and dazzling moonlight, as he trudged steadily along the white sandy path. Once he sat down on the bole of a fallen coco-palm, leant his chin upon his hands, and seemed lost in thought. Then he rose again and set off at a rapid walk.

At the north end of the little island he came to a stop, for farther progress was barred by the wide channel separating Ujilong from the next island; the tide was flowing, and the connecting reef was covered with three feet of water. He stood a while, looking about him, and then turned toward a cleared space among the coco-palms, where a low square enclosure formed of loosely piled blocks of coral stood clearly out in the moonlight; in the centre of the square were two graves, one of which had at its head a cross, roughly hewn from a slab of coral stone.

The Spaniard leant with folded arms upon the wall, and for some minutes intently regarded the emblem of Christianity; then, stepping over the wall, he walked up to the graves, took off his cap, and knelt beside the cross, bending his head reverently before it.

Hidden behind the boles of the coco-palms, Barry and Velo watched and listened; for now and then a sob would escape from the man as he prayed and made the sign of the cross. Suddenly he laid himself down upon the grave, placed his out-

spread hands upon the foot of the stone, and the listeners heard him weeping.

'Mother of Christ, and Jesu Most Merciful, forgive me my sins,' he cried, rising to his knees and clasping his hands. 'Here, before Thy cross, I plead for mercy. Holy and Blessed Virgin, help and save me, for no longer can I bear the guilt that is on my soul.'

Again he bent his head and prayed silently; then he rose, put on his cap, stepped over the low wall, and set off almost at a run towards the village. Barry and Velo followed him till he reached their house. Here, for a moment or two, he stood before the entrance as if in doubt. He then went inside and called:

'Where are you, Mr Barry?'

'Here,' said Barry, as he stepped inside. 'What is the matter, Barradas? You look ill. Sit down.'

'Yes, I will sit down, for I have something to tell you—something that I should have told you long ago. I will make a clean breast of it all—before I go mad. Mr Barry, your life is in danger. Rawlings and the Greek mean to murder you before the brig reaches Singapore.'

Barry drew an empty case up to the rude table and sat down.

'I don't doubt it,' he said quietly. 'Now, tell me, before you go any further, the true story of Tracey's death.'

'As God is my witness, I will tell you all—all. Tracey was not mate; he was captain and owner.'

'I know all *that*—have known it for some time; but I want to know how he died.'

'Rawlings shot him. One day Tracey came on board unexpectedly, and found him in his cabin making a tracing of a chart of this lagoon. I heard them quarrelling, and then heard a shot. When I ran below, Tracey was dead. Rawlings had shot him through the head. That was two days before you came on board.'

'You had better go on board now,' Barry said to Barradas half-an-hour later. 'I will trust you to help me to undo some of the wrong you have done;' and he held out his hand.

#### CHAPTER IX.—PREPARING FOR THE 'LITTLE CELEBRATION.'

**D**AY after day the work of gathering its hidden wealth from the bottom of the lagoon went on. Once in every week Barry managed to communicate with Mrs Tracey personally or by letter, telling her how matters were progressing and asking her to be patient.

'In a week or two,' he wrote, 'we shall have possession of the brig—without bloodshed, I hope. Now that Barradas is with us, I feel less anxiety.

Whether they suspect him or not we cannot tell; but the steward said that they (Rawlings and the Greek) certainly have a secret understanding of some sort concerning Barradas. He believes they have planned to murder him as they first planned to dispose of me. They are closely watched, not only by the steward, but by Barradas himself, who plays his part of the "good comrade" well. Heaven forgive the man for his past crimes, for he is, I know, deeply penitent. Your supposed death weighs heavily on his mind; but he must not know anything more than he does at present. I fear the joy of knowing you are alive would be too much for his excitable, impassioned nature. He would be unable to restrain himself.'

Barry received an answer in a day or two, telling him that she too had made good progress down at Tebuan.

'We have quite forty tons of beautiful shell here now, either cleaned or rotting-out at various places on the beach. Last week the people told me that they were diving three miles from here, and could see the brig's masts quite distinctly. I warned them to be careful. As for the pearls, I am afraid I must show them to you after all; I am tired of looking at them by myself. There are over sixty now for the necklace, nearly every one of which is a perfect match. I have them apart from the others in a box of soft white wood, which Pané made for me, and I have called the box "Rose Maynard's Dot."

'Now I must tell you some other news. Yesterday two ships were seen a long, long way off to the westward. I have no doubt but they are the first of the sperm-whalers making south again towards New Caledonia and the New Hebrides. We are sure to see several more; and if any of them comes within eight or ten miles I could have a letter sent off for you—it would perhaps get to Sydney long before the *Mahina*; and just imagine how delighted *some one* would be to hear from you.'

So Barry wrote two long letters, one to Rose and one to Watson, telling them both that he hoped to see them in less than six months. To Watson he told the whole of the strange tragedy of the *Mahina*, and of the marvellous escape of Mrs Tracey, adding in conclusion:

'Do not tell Miss Maynard all these horrors. They would cause her intense anxiety; and I have only said that Mrs Tracey's husband is dead, and that she is returning to Sydney in the brig. I am in hopes we may run across a man-of-war; if so I can get rid of these gallows-birds for a time, at any rate, before they are brought to trial. Good-bye, and good luck.'

He sent the letters down to Tebuan by Velo that night, and then work went on with renewed energy—Barry with the boats, Rawlings and the Greek amid the stench of the decaying oysters on the sandbank; and Barradas, silent, grim, and determined, attended to the brig, and began to

prepare her for sea again, assisted by the four white seamen.

Then came the time when the divers ceased from work, and the last boatloads of shell were landed on the islet, for the little brig had as much stowed in her hold as she could carry with safety, and was deeper in the water than she had ever been since the day she was launched.

That evening, whilst Rawlings and the boat-swain were ashore at the village bathing in fresh water from a native well, Barradas and the steward were quietly at work in the trade-room opening a case of Snider carbines, quickly cleaning and oiling the breeches, and then passing them, with an ample supply of cartridges, into the eager hands of Joe and Velo, by whom they were carried into the fo'c'sle and given to those others of the crew then on board. Each man received his weapon in silence and hid it under the mats of his bunk.

'When is it to be, Velo?' asked one of the divers.

'It may be to-night,' replied the Samoan. 'Be ye ready when the time comes.'

Returning to the trade-room, the empty case was nailed up again, and another full one lifted on top of it. In the main cabin itself there was a stand of twenty rifles with cutlasses; but these were not disturbed for the time, as the absence of even one would most likely be noticed by Rawlings.

After they had finished their bath the captain and Paul, carrying their towels in their hands, strolled up to Barry's house. He had just lit his lamp, and, with a native sailor helping him, was packing up his traps, for this was his last night on shore.

'Ah! putting your house in order, Barry?' said Rawlings blandly.

'Yes; just straightening up a bit, and getting my gear ready to be taken on board,' he replied.

'We must have a little bit of a celebration to-night, I think,' resumed Rawlings, 'and let the men have a final fling too. They have worked splendidly under your management; and our success is largely due to you.'

Barry nodded. 'Yes; they've worked very well indeed; and I think we might have a bit of a celebration, as you suggest. Let us say to-morrow night—I'm a bit too tired to-night—and at daylight I'll start off with Velo and shoot a couple of pigs for the men. They'll think a lot of that.'

'Quite so! A first-rate idea, Mr Barry. They can have the whole day and night to themselves.' Then, after a pause, he began to discuss with his officer the probabilities of the future—the return of the *Mahina* and the establishment of a permanent pearling station on the lagoon.

Barry listened, now and then making a suggestion of his own, for which, as usual, Rawlings thanked him effusively.

'And you think, Mr Barry, that this lagoon can be fished for many years?' he inquired.

'Certain. It would take us four or five years as we have been working, without touching the deep-water patches. The bottom of this lagoon is paved with shell. There are hundreds of thousands of pounds' worth of shell in it yet, let alone the pearls.'

The Greek's greedy eyes lit up and his white teeth set. 'Ah! ah! ah!' he said, pantingly.

'Well, we shall have our celebration to-morrow night, Mr Barry,' said Rawlings genially.

'Yes, we shall wind up everything by a good time to-morrow night,' answered the mate with unusual warmth, as, after some further talk, he walked down to the boat and went off on board with the others.

Just before supper Barry strolled along the main-deck. Barradas was in the waist, leaning over the bulwarks, smoking, and watching the movements of some large fish in the phosphorescent water. Barradas raised his head as the mate came near, and looked at him inquiringly.

'Not to-night,' said Barry in a low voice as he passed; 'but is everything ready?'

The second-mate nodded.

'Let the men go ashore if they wish.'

'We could do it now—easily,' muttered Barradas as the mate again passed him.

'No,' said Barry quickly; 'to-morrow night will be best. I have something on shore which must be attended to. But I'll be back early in the afternoon.'

As soon as supper was over Barry turned in, telling the steward to call him at daylight. Rawlings and the others sat up late; but their talk did not disturb him, for he was really tired, and meant to get a good night's rest to fit him for the work he had in hand on the following day and night.

At daylight he was aroused, and after a cup of coffee and a biscuit he and Velo, each carrying a rifle, set out in the dinghy, with two hands in her, towards one of the islands on the north side of the lagoon. Here, in full view of those on board the brig, they drew the boat up on the beach, leaving the two native sailors with her, and then struck off into the palm-grove, walking steadily on till they reached the centre of the island. Here, lying or sitting about under the trees, were the whole population of Tebuan, with Mrs Tracey in their midst.

All the men were armed with spears and clubs, and some were clothed from head to foot in armour of coco-nut fibre; they all sprang to their feet with a babble of excitement as the white man drew near; but at a sign from Mrs Tracey they at once stilled their voices and sat quietly down again.

Mrs Tracey, now thoroughly recovered from her accident, and her cheeks flushed with excitement, listened eagerly to Barry for some minutes; then



she beckoned the expectant natives to gather round her, and spoke to them in their own tongue.

'To-morrow night, my friends, all will be well. This white man is my good friend, and will restore to me my husband's *kai buke* (ship), and ye shall see the two white men who murdered him and cast me into the sea, bound with links of iron, hand and foot. When that is done, then shall I give to every man of Tebuan a rifle, and as many bullets as he can carry, and five hundred sticks of tobacco; and every woman and child shall take whatever their eye desires—red and blue cloth, and beads, and biscuit, and rice; for ye have been my good friends—friends when I was sick and distressed and poor.'

A murmur of approval broke from the wild, savage-looking people; and then, one by one, they came and shook hands with Barry, and quietly dispersed to fish and hunt, Mrs Tracey warning them not to show themselves anywhere on the inner beach, for fear they might be seen from the ship.

Barry remained talking to Mrs Tracey for another hour or so, until Velo and some of the Tebuan men appeared carrying a large boar which they had shot. This was at once sent off to the boat, as well as four or five turtles which had been captured.

'Good-bye till to-morrow night, then,' said Barry, holding out his hand. 'Now, remember, when you see two fires on the south-east islet, you and your people can start. On the beach you will find our two whale-boats, with some of the hands awaiting you. They will bring you all on board without making any noise. You and these two young women can hide in the sail-room; the men will be taken care of by Velo and our own men until I want them.'

'I will not fail to remember every word. Good-bye once more.'

At three o'clock in the afternoon Rawlings saw the dinghy leisurely returning to the brig. She was pulling in close to the shore, whilst Barry and Velo were walking along the beach, rifles in hand, looking out for a chance shot at a pig. Barradas heaved a sigh of relief when he saw them, for his nerves had been at a tension for many days past, and he feared that something fatal to their plans might occur at the last moment. That Barry had some other object in going ashore than pig-shooting he well knew, although he could not guess what it was; for, as a matter of prudence, Barry had not yet even told him of the friendly relations existing between himself and the people of Tebuan; and, except for that one night after the scene in the little cemetery, neither of them had mentioned Mrs Tracey's name. The Spaniard believed her bones to be lying a thousand fathoms deep, and Barry did not care to undeceive him, although the man's grief and bitter self-accusations for his share in

the tragedy had at first moved him to tell Barradas the truth, if only out of pity.

Very smart and clean did the *Mahina* look as the dinghy ran alongside and Barry stepped on deck. Her newly-painted sides shone snowy white in the bright tropic sun, and her decks had been scrubbed and scrubbed again with soft pumice-stone till they were as smooth to the touch as the breast of a sea-bird. Aloft, her brightly-scraped spars and carefully-tended running and standing gear matched her appearance below; and even the cabins had been thoroughly overhauled and repainted. The two large boats used during the pearling operations yet lay astern; for Barry, who, as Mrs Tracey said, 'thought of everything,' had his own reasons for delaying to hoist them inboard. 'Leave them till the last thing to-morrow morning,' he suggested to Rawlings, 'as the men are having liberty to-day.'

'You fellows must cook that pig and the turtle on shore,' said Barry to some of the crew who were leaning over the rail looking into the boat; 'we don't want a dirty mess made on the decks now.'

'Ay, ay,' responded Joe; and one of the other white seamen jumping into the dinghy, followed at a sign from Velo by two or three natives, she was pushed off from the side and rowed ashore with Velo in charge. The two whale-boats were already on shore with some of the crew, and the nude brown-skinned figures could be seen walking about on the beach, or gathering a last lot of coco-nuts for the voyage. At dark the dinghy returned, Velo being left to superintend the feast which the men were to eat on shore.

Before then, and while it was still daylight and Rawlings was below and the Greek on the poop, Barry and the second-mate were standing on the topgallant fo'c'sle, looking up and apparently scrutinising the condition of things aloft. Barry was speaking.

'Watch me to-night when you see me rise from the table after supper is over. I'll collar Rawlings, and you must tackle the Greek. The steward will be behind him to help you; but you must see that he doesn't get out his knife. He's as strong as a buffalo. Don't hurt him if you can help it. I have leg-irons and handcuffs all ready in my berth. We'll get all the help we want in a few seconds—before either of them knows what has happened. Are you clear?'

The Spaniard nodded his black head. 'Thank God it is so near!'

'Keep your head clear, that's all,' muttered the mate, who saw the boatswain coming towards them. Then he added in his natural voice, as he ran his eye up and down the fore-stay, 'Well, perhaps so, Mr Barradas; but give me wire any day for standing-gear; it's better in every way to set up, and looks neater.'

Then he went aft again and sat on the sky-

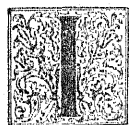
light smoking his pipe, now and then looking shorewards through the fast-gathering darkness. He had told Velo not to light the two signal-fires till it was quite dark.

Presently Rawlings, dressed as usual in a natty, spotless white duck suit, and smoking a cigar, came up from below.

'It's dark— isn't it?' he said, as he took a few brisk turns up and down the poop, taking off

his wide, soft hat of *fala* leaf to let the cool night-breeze play upon his head. As Rawlings walked past the light of the lantern hanging from the centre of the awning, just over the skylight, and Barry noticed the clean-cut, handsome features and calm, smiling face, he ground his teeth together, and thought of the Nemesis that in so strange a way was so soon to overtake the heartless little fiend.

## ECCENTRIC TESTATORS.



IN one respect a rich man might well envy a pauper, and that is in the absence of responsibility which the latter must enjoy when his time comes to join the majority; he has nothing to bequeath to others. The making of a will is a very serious undertaking, for the right or wrong fulfilment of the duty may work much good or much mischief after the testator has gone to the dust from which he sprang. It is much to the credit of human nature that most wills, so far as we can judge from the contents of those published in the newspapers, are drawn with care and foresight. It is an unusual thing to find one which is absolutely unjust or resentful in character, just as it is happily exceptional to meet with a human being in civilised society who exhibits so very disagreeable traits. Such exceptions naturally attract attention, together with such wills as exhibit other peculiarities of temperament on the part of the testators. For obvious reasons it would be improper to remark upon testamentary documents of recent date; but there can be no possible objection to reviewing some of the peculiarities of wills which were proved more than a century ago.

Although most of us would regard the making of a will as a very solemn act, there have been frivolous individuals who have treated the matter with such light-heartedness that they have actually written the document in rhyme. We should perhaps regard this as evidence of a sunny nature, rather than attribute it to any want of reverence or decorum. At least, so we should be inclined to regard the following poetical effort of one John Hedges, who died at Finchley, near London, more than one hundred and fifty years ago:

This fifth day of May,  
Being airy and gay,  
To hip not inclined,  
But of vigorous mind,  
And my body in health,  
I'll dispose of my wealth,  
And of all I am to leave  
On this side the grave,  
To some one or other,  
I think, to my brother;  
But because I foresaw  
That my brothers-in-law,

If I did not take care,  
Would come in for a share,  
Which I no ways intended  
Till their manners were mended—  
And of that, God knows, there's no sign;  
I therefore enjoin,  
And strictly command,  
As witness my hand,  
That nought I have got  
Be brought to hotch-pot;  
But I give and devise,  
As much as in me lies,  
To the son of my mother,  
My own dear brother,  
To have and to hold  
All my silver and gold,  
As the affectionate pledges  
Of his brother,

JOHN HEDGES.

Another poetical will is that of W. Jackett, who lived in Islington when that now thickly populated parish of London was a village separated from the Metropolis by many acres of smiling meadow-land. It may perhaps be noted here, by those who are under the impression that a will is of necessity bound to be full of legal subtleties and repetitions, that both wills were proved and remained unchallenged. Mr Jackett's will runs thus:

I give and bequeath,  
When I'm laid underneath,  
To my two loving sisters most dear  
The whole of my store,  
Were it twice as much more,  
Which God's goodness has granted me here.  
And that no one may prevent  
This my will and intent,  
Or occasion the least law racket;  
With a solemn appeal  
I confirm, sign, and seal  
This the true act and deed of

WILL JACKETT.

It is a less pleasant task to quote wills which seem to have been dictated by vindictiveness and malice; unfortunately there are many such on record. It is universally held that to strike a man when he is down and powerless is the height of cruelty and cowardice; surely it is equally reprehensible for a man to hound another through a

posthumous document, such as a will, when the writer will obviously be beyond reach of retaliation. Some of these vindictive wills, we are sorry to say, aim at the widow of the testator, who takes this method of revenge on the defenceless woman whom he has vowed to cherish and protect. 'I give unto my wife, Mary Darley,' says one affectionate spouse, 'for picking my pockets of sixty guineas, . . . the sum of one shilling.'

Even one who was called a 'nobleman' was not ashamed to carry on a contentious warfare with his helpmate beyond the grave, for we find in 1719 the Earl of Stafford bequeathing 'to the worst of women, who is guilty of all ills, the daughter of Mr Gramont, a Frenchman, whom I have unfortunately married, five-and-forty brass halfpence, which will buy her a pullet for her supper—a greater sum than her father can often make her; for I have known when he had neither money nor credit for such a purpose, he being the worst of men and his wife the worst of women. Had I known their character I had never married their daughter, nor made myself unhappy.'

Another gentleman who wished his unfortunate partner in life to feel the weight of his dead hand was Charles Parker, a London bookseller. 'I give and bequeath to Elizabeth Parker'—so runs the will—'the sum of fifty pounds, whom, through my foolish fondness, I made my wife, without regard to family, fame, or fortune, and who in return has not spared, most unjustly, to accuse me of every crime regarding human nature, save highway robbery.'

Stephen Swain did not aim his parting shot at his wife—perhaps he had none—but he vented his spleen on certain married acquaintances thus: 'I give to John Abbott and Mary his wife the sum of sixpence each, to buy for each of them a halter, for fear the sheriff's should not be provided.'

The above is a neat way of telling one's friends to 'go and be hanged,' and compares favourably with the laboured effusion which follows—an extract from the will of one J. A. Stow: 'I hereby direct my executors to lay out five guineas in purchase of a picture of the viper biting the benevolent hand of the person who saved him from perishing in the snow, if the same can be bought for that money; and that they do, in memory of me, present it to Edward Bearcroft, Esq., a King's Counsel, whereby he may have frequent opportunities of contemplating on it, and by a comparison between that and his own virtue be able to form a certain judgment, which is best and most profitable, a grateful remembrance of past friendship and almost parental regard or ingratitude and insolence. This I direct to be presented to him in lieu of a legacy of three thousand pounds I had by a former will, now revoked and burnt, left him.'

Mr David Davis, of Clapham, had also a neat way of firing a parting salute, as will be gleaned from the following extract from his last will

and testament: 'I give and bequeath to Mary Davis, daughter of Peter Delaport, the sum of five shillings, which is sufficient for her to get drunk with for the last time at my expense.'

Whatever poor Mary Davis's feelings might have been, the next victim to a remorseless will—one Daniel Church—seems only to have himself to thank for being cut off with the proverbial shilling. He had apparently been guilty of an act of petty larceny, which his father punished in that way. The will says: 'I give and devise to my son Daniel Church only one shilling; and that is for him to hire a porter to carry away the next badge and frame he steals.'

Joseph Dalky takes the opportunity afforded by his will of insulting his son-in-law in terms which doubtless had a pungency once, but which are hardly comprehensible to the modern reader: 'I give to my daughter Ann Spencer a guinea for a ring or any other bauble she may like better; I give to the lout her husband one penny to buy him a lark whistle . . . and this legacy I give him as a mark of my appreciation of his prowess and nice honour in drawing his sword on me (at my own table), naked and unarmed as I was, and he well fortified with custard.'

A gruesome legacy is that of Philip Thicknesse: 'I leave my right hand, to be cut off after my death, to my son; and I desire it may be sent to him, in hopes that such a sight may remind him of his duty to God, after having so long abandoned the duty he owed to a father, who once affectionately loved him.'

Another father seems apparently to have begun his will with the determination of punishing an unruly son; but, as the fairy stories say, all ends happily. We refer to the will of Richard Crawshay, the founder of the famous Welsh ironworks. It runs thus: 'To my only son, who never would follow my advice, and has treated me rudely in very many instances; instead of making him my executor and residuary legatee (as till this day he was), I give him one hundred thousand pounds.'

Some testators exhibit a curious interest in the disposal of their earthly remains, and those of limited means will often saddle their surviving relatives with the great cost of removal and burial in some distant place or foreign country. Here is a will in which the writer is most particular in the way his dead body should be adorned. It is an extract from the will of George Appleby: 'My body—after being dressed in flannel waistcoats instead of a shirt, an old surtout coat and breeches, without lining or pockets, an old pair of stockings (shoes I shall want none, having done with walking), and a worsted wig, if one can be got, I desire—may be buried in as plain a manner as possible, wherever my widow shall think proper.'

Here again is a curious extract from the will of one Edward Molyneux, who at the beginning



of this century was a wax and tallow chandler of Mayfair, London: 'I am sometimes accustomed to carry bank-notes in the fob of my breeches. Please to search the said breeches to see if there are any.'

One John Baskerville, of Birmingham, made an express condition as to the disposal of his body, as follows: 'My further will and pleasure is, and I hereby declare, that the devise of all my goods and chattels, as above, is upon the express condition that my wife, in concert with my executors, do cause my body to be buried in a conical building, in my own premises, heretofore used as a mill, which I have lately raised higher, and painted, and in a vault which I have prepared for it. This doubtless may appear a whim; perhaps it is so; but it is a whim for many years resolved on, as I have a hearty contempt for all superstition,' &c.

Dr William Dunlop, one of the pioneers of the Canada Company, made a characteristic and amusing will:

'In the name of God: Amen.

'I, William Dunlop, of Gairbraid, in the township of Colborne, district of Huron, Western Canada, being in sound health of body, and my mind just as usual (which my friends who flatter me say is no great shakes at the best of times), do make this my last will and testament, as follows:

'I leave the property of Gairbraid, and all other lands and property I may die possessed of, to my sisters Helen Boyle Story and Elizabeth Boyle Dunlop; the former because she is married to a minister whom (God help him!) she hen-pecks; the latter because she is married to nobody, nor is she like to be, for she is an old maid, and not marketrife. . . . I leave my silver tankard to the eldest son of old John, as the representative of the family. I would have left it to old John himself, but he would melt it down to make temperance medals, and that would be sacrilege. However, I leave my big horn snuff-box to him; he can only make temperance horn-spoons of that. I leave my sister Jenny my Bible, the property formerly of my great-great-grandmother, Bethia Hamilton, of Woodhall; and when she knows as much of the spirit of it as she does of the letter she will be another guise Christian than she is. I also leave my late brother's watch to my brother Sandy, exhorting him at the same time to give up Whiggery, Radicalism, and all other sins that do most easily beset him. I leave my brother Alan my big silver snuff-box, as I am informed he is rather a decent Christian, with a swag-belly and a jolly face. I leave Parson Chevasse (Magg's husband) the snuff-box I got from the Sarnia Militia, as a small token of my gratitude for the service he has done the family in taking a sister that no man of taste would have taken. I leave John Caddle a silver teapot, to the end that he may

drink tea therefrom to comfort him under the affliction of a slatternly wife. I leave my books to my brother Andrew, because he has been so long a Jungley Wallah [bushman] that he may learn to read with them. I give my silver cup, with a sovereign in it, to my sister Janet Graham Dunlop, because she is an old maid and pious, and therefore will necessarily take to horning. And also my granma's snuff-mull, as it looks decent to see an old woman taking snuff.'

This will was duly signed, and an important codicil afterwards added, but in deference to a friend who doubted its validity he took advice on the subject. The friend who examined it pronounced it eccentric, but not on that account illegal or informal. However, his widow was often in the law-courts afterwards, her motto being 'We'll fecht it oot!'

Of a far more amiable, although often silly, kind are the wills which affect pet animals. We all know that affection for cats, dogs, and birds is often carried to an absurd pitch, and that people will sometimes lavish upon their furry or feathered friends luxuries which they would under no circumstances give to their human acquaintances or relations. A Mrs Hannah White, in 1798, left twenty-five pounds per annum to the mother of one of her servants for the maintenance of five cats during the course of their natural lives; five pounds being a very liberal provision for each pussy, as our readers will admit. But this lady, it should be observed, also left a thousand pounds each to two hospitals, legacies to her domestics, and the residue of her estate, which was considerable, to her doctor, or apothecary, as he was called in those days. Her relatives appealed against the will; and in the sequel the apothecary's claim was struck out, but the other provisions—including the bequest to the cats—were confirmed.

Another lady, Elizabeth Hunter, a wealthy spinster, was at great pains to provide for the future of a pet bird, as the following extract from her will testifies: 'I give and bequeath to my beloved parrot, the faithful companion of twenty-five years, an annuity for its life of two hundred guineas a year, to be paid half-yearly as long as this beloved parrot lives. . . . And I do bequeath to Mrs Mary Dyer, widow, my foresaid parrot, with its annuity of two hundred guineas a year. . . . And I give to Mrs Mary Dyer the power to will and bequeath my parrot and its annuity to whomsoever she pleases, provided that person is neither a servant nor a man; it must be bequeathed to some respectable female. . . . And I also will and desire that twenty guineas may be paid to Mrs Dyer directly on my death, to be expended on a very high, long, and large cage for the aforesaid parrot; it is also my will and desire that my parrot shall not be removed out of England.'

There are many persons who would be glad

enough to acquire an income of two hundred guineas a year upon such conditions, for the keep of the bird could hardly cost as many pence. The anxiety that her pet should not fall into the hands of a man, possibly because it might learn to express itself in coarser terms than might be desirable, is very amusing, and seems to give us an insight into the testatrix's personality which we should otherwise be without. It would be interesting to know the sequel of this story—whether the parrot died inconsolable for the loss

of its mistress, and was speedily replaced by a counterfeit so that the annuity should not lapse, or whether it lived to a green old age. Possibly it may be alive now. It may, in fact, be that identical bird which we hear mimicking the cats, dogs, and street-cries of the neighbourhood as we write. Its speech is alternated with the most ear-splitting screeches, and we cannot conceive how any one can harbour such a nuisance—unless, indeed, our worthy neighbour be paid a handsome annuity for doing so.

## CASHIERED.

By ANDREW BALFOUR, Author of *By Stroke of Sword*, &c.

### I.



THE lieutenant was but a boy, a product of the English public school and of Sandhurst, with an incipient moustache and a face which six months before had been fresh and ruddy as a fox-hunter's at Christmas-tide. But the dreaded West Coast had done its work, in part at least; and it was a haggard, weary, yellow visage which, with a pair of field-glasses, swept the dull-green fringe of the relentless bush, and then turned to the little garrison. The lieutenant gave an order, pointed with his finger, and from a loophole in the stockade came a flash, a sharp report. As if in answer to a summons, a black shape sprang up from the edge of the forest cover, screamed wildly, and with convulsive twitchings pitched out into the open, rolled over and over, and lay still.

'Ready, lads!' sang out their officer; and the men of the frontier police prepared to do as they had done every day and many a night for the past six weeks.

They were a dusky lot, in ragged uniforms, with cheek-bones which told a tale of want of food, parched lips which were evidence of the muddy, brackish water that could scarcely moisten them and yet was all their comfort, and fierce wild eyes which spoke to wakeful nights and dread uncertainty. Day and night, night and day, had they watched and fought and suffered, and still the old flag drooped idly from its post in the simmering heat, and still they waited for relief with a hope which waned within them.

The lieutenant looked to his revolver, and with fingers which trembled a little rolled a thin cigarette and tried hard to muster up a cheery smile. It was a sorry attempt, for his nerves were giving way, and there was that in his blood which saps all joviality and makes the liver in very truth a seat of melancholy. There had been little loss in men, for the stockade was strong and high, and lead-coated stones and pot-legs, though ugly missiles, are none too efficient as regards the

searching of loopholes at eighty and a hundred yards; but to the lieutenant the scorching sun's rays, the empty stomach, the dry and burning throat, the want of sleep, and the utter loneliness were as bad—nay, worse—than the loss of half-a-dozen black fellows, faithful to the death though these might be.

It was his first experience of war, and there was no glory in the business. If he failed, few would ever learn that Fort Muti had held out to the bitter end against terrible odds, and fewer still would care. Men's minds were busy elsewhere, for the West Coast was not all Africa, and trouble was brewing with men of another colour and another clime. For all that, the lieutenant had done his duty, and much more than he imagined, for many things unknown to him depended on the safety of his outpost.

'Here they come!' he cried suddenly, and from every quarter of the encircling forest darted white puffs of smoke, and noises innumerable filled the air—the sharp rifle-crack, the heavy boom of the elephant-gun, the *bang, bang* of flint-lock muskets, and then the battle-yell of a savage foe. There was no answer from Fort Muti. Its defenders could not afford to waste powder on the scrub; but now came the rush. A horde of savages, their hair frizzed out into fantastic patterns, their bodies naked save for the loin-cloth, bounded into the open and raced towards the palisades.

'Give it them, men!' yelled the lieutenant, and they got it. It was the old Martini which served the black police, and the Martini bullet has driving-power. At such a range, in such a mass of humanity, each leaden messenger found a plethora of billets both temporary and permanent, and the assailants found things too hot for them. A few, fanatics all, escaped the deadly hail and sprang at the defences, only to be dashed to earth with the butt or run through with the bayonet.

'The children of the white devil' had conquered once again. It could not last, however. The enemy had shown more boldness than hitherto, the cartridges were woefully less, and a fresh attack was clearly impending.

The lieutenant's heart sank within him, and yet he spoke a few words of praise and encouragement to his men. His speech was never ended. Distant but distinct there rang out a bugle-call, and then from the green depths around came the rattling crash of a fusillade and the constant *pop, pop, pop* of the ubiquitous Maxim.

Fort Muti was relieved.

'Splendid, my dear boy!' said a major of the line twenty minutes later. 'You have done capitally, and if I can manage it you'll have the D.S.O., for you deserve it if any one does. Now take a pull at this.'

Perhaps he guessed that the lieutenant was on the verge of disgracing his manhood.

## II.

Three weeks had come and gone, just half as long as the ordeal at Fort Muti had lasted, and the relieving column was cutting its arduous way through the dense bush to yet another isolated post whose fate hung in the balance.

The lieutenant had been offered his chance to return to the coast or to accompany the expedition, and, like a boy, he had chosen the latter alternative. His feeling of *malaise*—those shivers down his spine, that dragging pain, slight, but never absent from his left side—should have warned him. The surgeon did so; but the lieutenant merely laughed and lied to him, and threw dust in his eyes, for the surgeon was wounded and scarcely so keen at a diagnosis as was his wont. So the lieutenant journeyed with the rest, and was wild with delight at having four white men to talk to and something decent to eat, while the fizz of soda-water was as the plashing of fountains in his ears. His spirits were high, and his head just a little swelled with success. He began to talk big, and was somewhat of a nuisance with his tales of how 'I thought this' and how 'I did that'; but his fellow-officers pardoned much and smiled grimly. It was one thing, they told him, to fight from cover, and quite another to face death in the open; and the lieutenant was offended and sulked, and wondered why his head swam, and why he started at every sudden noise from beyond the double wall of creeper-clad trees which hemmed in the long, snake-like, crawling column.

He grew snappish and irritable, and was no pleasant companion. The others, who did not know him well, put him down as a conceited young ass, for their test of illness was appetite, and the lieutenant ate like a horse. They did not know that after each meal he was sick as a dog. The malaria, a peculiar and insidious form, fastened upon him slowly; for his body had been healthy, and he was young and sober, but its grip was none the less sure. His poisoned blood reacted on his brain, and as he stumbled forward he would start at the sight of a snake, and peer fearfully into the green screen behind him, where, had he but known it, glided the naked foe. At

last the column received a sudden check. Without warning, just as its head debouched from the long gloomy lane into an open space leading to a sluggish stream crossed by a narrow bridge, a heavy fire was opened upon it both in front and on the flanks. Men fell rapidly, but there was no grappling with the enemy in their beloved jungle. The bridge must be carried and the cluster of mud huts beyond it captured. The major glanced about him. His senior officer was down, shot in the leg, and the surgeon was already getting a tourniquet upon his femoral. The next in command was far in the rear; but the lieutenant was close at hand.

'Take a couple of dozen men and clear the bridge,' shouted the major. The lieutenant looked at him and looked at the bridge, a flimsy thing of cane and creepers, swept by a hot fire from the low mud wall, above which cropped up the domed roofs of the native huts. The brown river drifted sullenly beneath it. The air was full of death; men were becoming confused; it was no time to linger. Mechanically the lieutenant saluted; but he made no move, he issued no order.

Instead he crouched a little, and his hands shook, while his yellow lips went white.

'Do you hear me, lieutenant?' roared his commanding officer. 'Take that bridge, and at once, sir!'

Still the *ping, ping* went on, mingled now and then with dull, sickening thuds and the cry of men in pain, or the horrid gurgle which blood makes in the throats of those who die.

The lieutenant looked behind him. There was no way of escape.

'Lieutenant —, for the last time I order you to take the bridge.' The major's voice was harsh yet tremulous with passion. His sword pointed the way.

'Men of the police, I myself will lead you! Follow me!' he cried, and with a wild cheer the men of the leading company dashed at the hidden enemy, swarmed across the bridge, and took the village without the loss of a single file; and all the time the lieutenant lay and grovelled on the ground.

There was no D.S.O. for him; the service knew him no more. Men said he was a coward, and spoke low, for it was not a pleasant subject. They whispered that he was all right when behind a stockade, but no earthly use in a good-going tussle.

The parasite of malaria, the stealthy plasmodium, knew better. It alone could tell what became of the boy. No coward chooses to die as the lieutenant chose within a year of the relieving of Fort Muti.

## III.

Since early morn the thundering roar of cannon had echoed from kopje to kopje, mingling with the shriek of flying shells and the heavy rumble



of field artillery and ammunition wagons. The naval brigade had shelled the Boer position and been shelled in its turn. The deep Tugela, where of yore the river-horse had gambolled in ungainly play, on whose banks vast herds of antelope had roamed, in whose rapid waters the lion had oftentimes quenched his thirst, now swept as a dividing-line between the invader and the advancing force.

The low hills were full of armed Boers, the intersecting valleys patrolled by their horse, every point of vantage crowned by their heavy Krupps and far-reaching Creusots. Thousands of Mauser riflemen lay biding their time—rude, rough dwellers on the veldt, but stubborn foes and deadly marksmen. With keen eyes they watched the preparations for the British infantry attack, and marvelled at the courageous folly of the hated 'rooineks.'

To the south of the river the brown battalions were mustering, every man keen to get to close quarters with an enemy which loved cover as the prowling beast of prey loves the shade of rock and bush and scrub. Bugles and cavalry trumpets sounded loud and mellow, company after company stood to arms, troop after troop clattered joyfully to their appointed posts; while the eager artillerymen, brave to rashness, whirled, bounding and bumping, to the front, their teams straining at the harness, the white dust whirling from beneath the wheels of the gun-carriages.

A mounted officer spurred quickly to where the Imperial Scouts were drawn up in a long double line, two lines of steel and khaki upon two other lines of restless horses which smelt the battle from afar. He was met by their commander; a few brief words passed between them, and the cavalry were at once put in motion and trotted towards the river's brink.

Halting where they escaped the fire, they learned that a chance had been vouchsafed to them. The ford had to be tested, for the gallant Irish Brigade had been ordered to cross the Tugela and storm the kopjes. There was a call for volunteers; but every man was willing. A half-dozen, envied by their comrades, received the order, and amongst them was a young trooper who had found it hard to pass the doctors, and yet had managed to enlist, for men were wanted who could ride well and shoot straight, and he had given ample evidence that he possessed both accomplishments. His sallow face was lined and weary; trouble was marked upon his brow; he was old for his years; but in his eyes was a fiery glitter and his teeth were set. This time he would not fail his country.

'You are to search the ford, cross if possible, and return and report,' was the command, with an additional, 'Good luck to you, my lads.'

It had to be a dash, and a dash it was. Into the level raced the troop, and a hail of bullets came swishing past their ears, furrowing the earth

about them, scattering the dust which rose like water-jets on a pond when a thunder-shower pits its surface.

*Thud! crash!* One was down; but on they galloped. It was a marvel they were not swept away by such a storm of lead. Another horse plunged and shrieked in agony; another man pitched backwards and trailed one foot in stirrup upon the ground.

It could not be done; every man of them was wounded, and every horse but one. Its rider, a mere boy, shot in the shoulder, with a useless left arm, careered forward alone. He reached the water; with reddened spurs he forced his maddened steed into the stream. On and on they pressed; the river swirled about them. It was the ford, but now could scarce be so called, for the wily foe had dammed back the waters, which rose to the horse's withers and threatened to sweep the hoofs from under him. The drift deepened—there was a desperate struggle; then it shoaled.

Those who watched shouted aloud in admiration. Although they knew he could not hear, they now cried upon the venturesome trooper to return. He had crossed—the first man to cross—and the brigade was to follow him, to the death if need be; but it were a pity if he should now fall.

'Heavens! he must be mad!' exclaimed a staff-officer, as through his binoculars he saw the horseman force his jaded beast to take the slope—saw him, alone and unprotected, face the impregnable position. 'Come back, you fool!' he cried; and suddenly the horse came, and its rider with it.

Struck on the neck, the dripping charger wheeled in fright and dashed back upon its trail. Struck in a dozen places, the trooper reeled, clutched at its mane, and then, as they floundered from ford to pool and from pool to deep and rushing current, he lost his hold and was swept away.

Swinging upon the bosom of the Tugela, sweeping to join the Buffalo and the sea, wild-eyed and blood-stained, drifted the shot-riddled corpse of Trooper —, whom none knew to be an ex-lieutenant.

#### CASTLES IN SPAIN.

CASTLES in Spain! oft in my youthful pride,

When virile fancy widespread wings hath ta'en,  
Thy sun-kissed turrets have I clear descried:

Castles in Spain!

And if 'neath toil-spent years faith 'gan to wane,

Still I gazed forth with hope, nor did I chide,  
Seeking stray sunbeams through the mist and rain.

Frail hopes borne seawards on the lapsing tide

Fade faint and far from me with sad refrain;

Into the brooding night they softly glide:

Castles in Spain!

Geo. H. LUDOLF.



# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### HEALTH AND ILL-HEALTH IN INDIA.

By MRS MONTAGU TURNBULL.



WHEN speaking in the House of Commons on the 11th of March last year, Mr Chamberlain, alluding to malarious fever as the curse of the white man in tropical climates, thought that the terrific mortality on the West Coast of Africa might in great measure be prevented by proper treatment and good nursing, and these regions made 'at all events as healthy as Calcutta, where it was possible for Europeans to reside for long periods.'

Having, with my husband, the late General Turnbull, spent twenty-one happy years in 'the City of Palaces,' I venture upon a few words in defence of the climate by stating that during all those years not one case of malarious fever occurred there. The *danghy* fever in epidemic form visited Calcutta with every symptom of the influenza now in Europe; but, the climate being more favourable, no adults died of it, and only a very few children. The natives consider that every fifty years India is subject to the visitation, but do not fear it. One Hindu servant asked me, in a very quaint manner, for 'five days' leave to go and have the fever,' returning at the appointed time quite pleased at having had it strong.

It is true that the lamented Lady Canning—wife of the then reigning Viceroy—died in Calcutta of malarious fever. She did not, however, contract it there, but on the Darjeeling Hills, in a valley so unhealthy that the natives had deserted it; and, although warned of the danger, she spent a whole day there sketching the beautiful scenery, meantime inhaling the poison, and returned to Calcutta to die. Truly she was a woman '*sans peur et sans reproche*.'

I believe Calcutta to be as healthy as any part of England. Cholera, like the Wandering Jew, is everywhere at times; but we never had the 'deaths from all causes' more than twenty in the thousand, whereas in England it has lately been much larger.

'Lord Curzon considers going to Simla not in the light of a holiday resort; but without relief no Viceroy could stand the strain in the low-lying delta of Bengal, and the atmosphere of the hills was more conducive to mental and physical energy.' But the late Lord Canning spent more than one summer in Calcutta under the most trying circumstances conceivable, for he was there at the hottest season when the Indian Mutiny broke out, and yet retained both mental and physical energy. On the Queen's Birthday he gave the usual ball at Government House, his noble policy being to show a bold front. Both Lord and Lady Canning were cool and collected, and the ball was kept up with spirit.

I shall never forget that night. We, having the private *entrée*, walked up the stairs lined by the Native Bodyguard, and saw them standing at the doors of the private apartments in Government House. Lord Canning was advised to have them exchanged for a European guard, but refused, and slept that night and many others with the native soldiers fully armed standing at his door—men of the same creed as those in open mutiny all around.

The prejudice against Calcutta is unfounded, and people passing through remember only the disagreeables. Lately a retired officer of the Royal Navy, who had spent a few days there in his ship on the Hooghly, called upon me, and all he remembered was 'seeing the dead bodies of Hindus floating down the river.' My recollection was very different. I never saw what he described, but remember the fine trees and sweet-scented shrubs loading the air with perfume, and the fireflies playing round them at sunset. Indian society is sneered at by those knowing very little about it. In our time it was good, and enjoyed by many distinguished persons, and free from the *nouveaux riches*. Most of the best families over here were represented by younger sons and other relatives. Perhaps changes have occurred; but the climate is the same, and

I never felt it interfere with any occupation I had in view.

On returning from Calcutta to England I was surprised at the struggle kept up to retain health—people running after change of air, yet complaining of the changeable climate. I stay at home, and the change comes to me. The conversation, too, is much about health, and the fear of sitting in a draught; whereas in Calcutta we sat, and even slept, in draughts. In fact, we took every liberty with the climate, yet many old Indian officers have lived to a great age. Dr John Bowen died lately in Brighton at the age of a hundred and one, having served in the Bengal Medical Service for thirty-eight years. Mr William Stalkartt died a short time ago in Calcutta at the age of eighty-four, having lived there for sixty-six years without once going to England or beyond a few miles from Calcutta. Sir Patrick Grant joined the Indian Service at the age of sixteen, and lived to be ninety-three years old. Sir Frederick Halliday is still living at the age of ninety-three; he was the first Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, after having been Member of the Supreme Council in Calcutta for many years, remaining all that time in Bengal before the introduction of railroads in India. There are also many stalwart old Indian officers still living, after having spent many years in Bengal and other parts of India. Above all, Field-Marshal Lord Roberts of Kandahar, the soldier and statesman of to-day, after forty-one years in India, said in his maiden speech in the House of Lords, 'I love India.' During the Diamond-Jubilee procession, his supple military figure, mounted on his Arab charger, excited the admiration of all spectators, and the loudest cheers; and now, forty-seven years since he joined the Indian army, and at the age of sixty-seven, he is chosen as the most distinguished officer in the British army to serve his Queen and country in South Africa.

I have no original connection with India, being a Welsh woman, born and reared in the cold climate of Wales and Shropshire. My father was the sporting writer of many years ago under the *nom de plume* of 'Nimrod,' and I am his youngest daughter, and only survivor of the family, by his marriage with Elizabeth Wynne of Penarth, whose cousin was the celebrated Sir Watkin Williams Wynn of Wynnstay, who raised the regiment of Ancient Britons during the Irish rebellion, and grandfather of the present Baronet.

The besieged army at Mafeking must recall to the minds of many the siege of Lucknow during the Indian Mutiny; and my memory takes me back to the illustrious garrison at Jelalabad during the first Afghan war, and the foul murders by the Ameer of Kabul.

A short time before the outbreak, General Elphinston was sent from England to take command of the Afghan army. He was a fine,

courteous old man—a society favourite—but quite unfit for any duty, being a martyr to gout and other ailments. We met him at dinner in Meerut with his A.D.C., Lord Jocelyn, and heard him express the pleasure he expected to derive from seeing a new country, as though he was going to 'crush a butterfly;' but he succumbed to the hardships of the first few marches, and died *en route*. I forget how Lord Jocelyn returned to India, but remember that he died in London of cholera, after having married Lady Fanny Cowper, the Queen of Beauty at Lord Eglinton's Tournament. We met his daughters in society in London; both were very beautiful, and died young.

We saw the avenging army on its return to India received by Lord Ellenborough at Ferozpur, with his army and reserve-camp of over sixty-thousand troops. The line was headed by the widow of the brave Sir Robert Sale, seated upon a large elephant; next to her was the widowed Mrs Trevor, with her twin-boys standing by her side in the howdah. The little fellows had bright-red hair; both are, I believe, still living, but the red hair is turned to white. Next came the beautiful Somnath gates, things of beauty and triumph, on a gun-carriage decked with flags, followed by the troops, looking worn, thin, and ragged. These were the survivors of the illustrious garrison. Few of them are alive now; but one I know is: at that time he was a subaltern, and is now General Chetwynd Stapylton, happily married and surrounded by his family. Honours were scarce in those days, and that old hero only wears the Afghan medal.

The horses, like the men, seemed worn out. Only the Bombay Artillery were looking well; they were horsed by Gulf Arabs. The Rev. Mr Whiting (chaplain to the Governor-General) was so pleased with their appearance that he asked one of the gunners what religion they professed, and the answer was that they were 'all Christians except a few Protestants.' The reverend gentleman was so amused that he related the story at Lord Ellenborough's table that night at dinner.

Lord Ellenborough was quite a soldier, and was beloved in the camp. My introduction to him was very amusing. On the day we joined the camp the races were taking place at Ferozpur; and being very dusty after the march, we rode to the back of the course to see what we could of the sport. Here some fences were put up for the afternoon leaping competition; and, our horses being fresh, we took them over once or twice, thinking we were unobserved; but Captain Hillier, A.D.C., rode up asking us, in the name of the Governor-General, to go into the stand, as the sun was getting hot. We made our excuses, but at last were persuaded to accompany the A.D.C. to be introduced to his lordship, who, after shaking hands said, 'I asked Hillier who that girl was,



riding so devilish well, with that shocking bad hat on her head.' I felt quite offended; but his manner soon afterwards was so courteous that I forgot our first meeting, and enjoyed the visit greatly. My hat was both shabby and dusty.

On Christmas Eve the Governor-General gave a large party in his tents. In the middle of one tent a branch of mistletoe was hung up, which his lordship made use of by kissing some of his lady guests under it. He asked Miss Annie McCaskill and myself to walk with him to look at it; and when there he kissed us both. I drew myself up, saying that I was a married woman; and he replied, 'Oh! are you? Then I will give you another for that.' Miss McCaskill was the daughter of General McCaskill, commanding the Meerut Division, and she was at that time engaged to marry Lieutenant Durand, the Engineer officer who placed the bags of gunpowder which blew up the gates of Ghazni. Afterwards he was Lieutenant-Governor of the North-western Provinces, and father of the distinguished Sir Mortimer Durand, now British minister to Persia.

The army of reserve not being required to move on, Generals Pollock and Nott having done the work, the camp was broken up; and soon afterwards we were ordered to Shikarpur, in Upper Sind, lately described by Sir James Lyall as 'the hottest place in the East.' As at that time it was very unhealthy, the native sepoys asked for extra pay to enable them to leave their families in India, and were disinclined to march. Sir Jasper Nicholls was then Commander-in-Chief, and made a sort of promise, which was not fulfilled when the troops arrived in Sind. This caused such discontent that the sepoys of the 64th Native Infantry refused to obey their officers, insulted Captain White the adjutant, pulled the cloth off the mess-table, piled their arms, and refused all duty.

Sir Richard Burton describes the affair in a book published lately by Lady Burton as the Life of her husband. Sir Richard Burton's account, which is quite incorrect, is given in the following words: 'There was great excitement at Shikarpur on 20th June 1844, when the sepoys of the 64th Regiment mutinied and beat their officers. The station was commanded by Major-General Hunter, C.B.—most of his experience was in studs.' But Sir Richard Burton is quite wrong, for General Hunter was in command of the division, and Colonel Moseley of the station; and

the outbreak thus treated so lightly by Sir Richard was actually of great importance, ending in the hanging of seven of the sepoys.

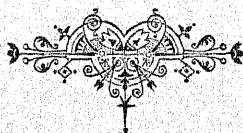
We were dining with Colonel Moseley on that night, when, at eight o'clock, his orderly made the report; it was at once despatched to General Hunter at Sukkur, and soon after daybreak the next morning the General with his staff arrived at Shikarpur, bringing a European regiment and field-battery. He at once addressed the sepoys, ordering them in to Sukkur, where he again addressed them, making several arrests; and on the next day the prisoners were tried by court-martial and condemned, when seven of the ringleaders were hanged on the Sukkur parade-ground at a full-dress parade of the whole garrison. Thus the mutiny was crushed by the promptitude of General Hunter, C.B., commanding the division in Upper Sind.

We were three years in Upper Sind, including the march through the desert, there and back to Bombay; yet during all that time we had only five days' rain, and that in thunderstorms. But irrigation was so well kept up by the Persian water-wheel that no difficulty was felt on account of water.

We met Sir Charles Napier, the hero of Meeanee, for the first time, on his way to command the Indian army, and afterwards had much of his friendship.

Many young officers were with us at Shikarpur who afterwards distinguished themselves greatly. The present General Younghusband, C.S.I., and Sir William Olpherts were there; also Rattray of 'Rattray's Sikhs,' and Major Jacob, who died young. We rode with Major Jacob to see him lay out the plan of 'Jacobabad,' at that time a dry corner of the desert, and now a flourishing station, with trees, roads, and gardens. The country was very unsettled, and the Beluchis at times troublesome.

The first I heard of Sir William Olpherts was when he was a young lieutenant. He saw one of his guns sinking in a quicksand, when, getting off his charger and mounting a wheel-horse, he so encouraged the team that they drew the guns safely out of danger. The last I heard of him was that he had been thrown out of a dog-cart and dangerously hurt, mutual friends expressing their anxiety as to his recovery; but I was quite sure it would require more than a dog-cart accident to kill Sir William Olpherts, K.C.B., V.C., the survivor of so many fights.



## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

## CHAPTER X.—AN ANGEL'S VISIT.



NOW for the fruitage of my move to the little house by the river.

Vaurel was an early riser, and was usually away to the woods after pigeons for the Château very soon after sunrise. He was away the morning after our adventure with Roussel before I woke; and, after a delightful plunge in the river, I set the coffee-pot in the core of white ashes on the hearth, and sat down on the wooden bench, with my pipe, to await his return. Boulot had elected to stop with me instead of following his master. He had not forgotten yesterday, and disapproved of my bathing, scuttling half-way up the hillside to await developments. He evidently thought me crazy, and feared to be the next victim of my mania. It was not till I was seated on the bench in the morning sunshine, with the water still in my hair and the glow of it in my blood, feeling fit and strong, and well content with the world—except as regards mademoiselle—that Boulot deemed it safe to come gingerly down the path and sniff round me doubtfully, and then flopped down at my feet with a sneeze of disgust at my late idiotic proceedings.

I was making him squirm apprehensively by suggesting that an occasional bath was good even for a gentlemanly and well-bred bulldog, especially as he expected to sleep on another gentleman's bed, when the short ears pricked up suddenly, and the great head rose from the short thick paws, and looked steadily past me along the side of the hill. Then I, too, caught a rustling among the leaves; and, following Boulot's steadfast look, I saw the figure of a woman approaching the house through the trees, and in another moment mademoiselle stood before me—the lovely face and great true eyes which had wrought themselves into my heart—mademoiselle herself. The beautiful face, indeed, carried the shadow of her troubles; but her eyes were more like the eyes of the portrait, for they sought mine with the touch of questioning shyness which had captivated my soul at the Salon.

Boulot and I sprang up together.

'Down, Boulot!' I said.—'He will not hurt you, mademoiselle,' and in my surprise I spoke in English.

It was in English that she answered me, and with scarce a trace of accent. 'Boulot and I are old friends,' she said, and stooped to caress him.

She wore a long brown cloak, and the hood was drawn over her head. She loosed the cloak and the hood fell back, and she sat down on the bench while I stood before her. My heart was beating furiously at her coming, for it could only

mean that she came to ask my help, or at all events my counsel. Whatever it meant, she had come.

I was still gazing at her with all my heart in my eyes, when she looked up at me timidly and said—and the sweet, soft voice was all in keeping with her face—'If my coming here seems to you an unmaidenly thing to do, monsieur'— She stopped, as though for my name.

'Hugh Lamont is my name, mademoiselle,' I said, 'and the dearest wish of my life is to be of service to you.'

'I thank you,' she said. 'I am surrounded by difficulties'—I think she had been going to say 'enemies,' but hesitated to express her fears so openly—and I scarce know where to turn for advice or who is to be trusted. You have heard about my brother'—

'I have heard, but I do not believe.'

'It heartens me to hear that some one besides myself believes in him. Colonel Lepard promises to get him released—they have sent him away to New Caledonia. I do not want him to be released, monsieur; I want him cleared. You understand'—

'Yes, I understand, mademoiselle; and cleared he shall be if only you will tell me how to go to work.'

'Oh!' she said, twining her fingers tightly together, 'I will tell you all I know, and perhaps you can help me. Colonel Lepard says he will get Gaston released if I will marry him—and I detest him. Father Dieufoy says there is no hope, and my only refuge is a convent; and now he has got the Duchesse de St Ouen down to assist him in persuading me. But I cannot trust them wholly. I cannot forget that I am rich, and that the Church is always poor. What am I to do, monsieur? I am only a girl, and they are too strong for me. I come to you because you are an Englishman, and I am half-English. My dear mother was from Warwickshire, and when Jeanne Thibaud told me there was an Englishman here who offered me his help my heart was glad. Though why—ah! yes, I remember—the portrait Monsieur Roussel painted for the Salon—Jeanne told me of it. How did you get it, monsieur?'

Without going into particulars, I told her I had bought it; and, stepping into the little house, I unlocked my portmanteau, brought it out in its case, and unrolled it before her. 'I value it more than anything else in the world,' I could not help saying. She regarded the portrait steadfastly, and in silence.

'Do you know that M. Roussel has been here, mademoiselle?'

'M. Roussel!' she said, with a startled look. 'What does he want here?'

'I don't know what he wants. He said he came to paint.'

She shook her head, and said as naively as a child, 'Monsieur Lamont, I do not think Monsieur Roussel is a good man. I wonder what he is here for.'

Perhaps I could have told her what brought him, but I thought it better not.

'He is not here now, mademoiselle. He fell into the river yesterday, and we have not seen him since. They are afraid he is drowned.'

'That was what brought all the people down to the banks yesterday?' she asked.

'Yes.'

'They did not find him?'

'No, they did not find him.'

'But he may still be alive?'

'He may be; but it is unlikely. When he went into the river Boulot's teeth were in his throat.'

'Where was he staying?'

'At Madame Thibaud's, in the village.'

'And he has not been there since?'

'He would hardly dare to show himself. He knocked Prudent Vaurel into the river and tried to drown him. Then Boulot got him by the throat, and that is the last any of us saw of him.'

The thought of it all caused her evident discomfort.

'If you will tell me all you know about this matter of your brother's, mademoiselle,' I said, to draw her thoughts elsewhere, 'I shall do everything in my power to set things right. I know at present only what the world knows.'

'I'm afraid I know but little more. Colonel Lepard knows everything. Gaston and he quarrelled—about?—' she stammered.

'I know,' I said encouragingly.

'And when Gaston was arrested, not very long afterwards, Colonel Lepard came to me and promised to help him; but'—

'But you do not trust Colonel Lepard?'

'I do not. He practically made it a condition that I should do what Gaston, I knew, would never have me to do, and—and'—

'And the colonel's promised help was not forthcoming.'

She nodded. 'I hate him,' she said in a low, vehement voice; 'but for Gaston's sake and to clear his good name I would willingly sacrifice myself.'

'That must not be,' I said, vehement in my turn. 'It shall not be, mademoiselle. Promise me you will never think of such a thing.'

'I trust you, Monsieur Lamont—for yourself, and because those whom I can trust, though they cannot help me, tell me you are an English gentleman, and in helping me, you, at all events, have no end of your own to serve.'

I thought differently; but it was too soon to tell her so.

'Now, how can I help you, mademoiselle? It is evident that Colonel Lepard holds the key to your brother's troubles. In what way can I force it from him?'

'I know so little,' she said, 'except what he himself has told me.'

'And that we cannot depend on.' It was very pleasant to find myself associated with her in this way.

Mademoiselle fell suddenly silent, and I saw from her knitted brow that she had got a new idea, and was working it out in her own mind. She looked up hesitatingly at me once or twice as though in two minds whether to voice her thought or not.

'Mr Lamont,' she said at last, 'I am going to ask a strange thing of you;' and I saw her eyes were pathetically bright and very near to overflowing. 'You will not misjudge me?'

'I could not, mademoiselle.'

'Then I beg of you to come and stay at the Château. I am only a girl, and one against three, and I am not strong enough to stand against them. Will you come?'

'That is but a very little thing to ask of me, mademoiselle.'

'One cannot tell what it may lead to,' she said—and my heart hopefully agreed with her—but I shall feel not quite so much alone in the world. I know—I know,' she said, with a break in her voice, 'I am passing all bounds, but you will let my necessity excuse me.'

'If you knew what pleasure it gives me to be of any service to you,' I said. 'Now, under what guise shall I come?'

'I was thinking—you might be an English friend of my mother's. Stay—be a cousin! That will be best, and no one can question your right to be there. You have heard of our troubles, and in Paris you learned I was here, and followed me to see if you could be of any assistance to me.'

'Capital!' I said; and then suddenly remembering: 'But what of the old priest? He saw me in the train that day. Will he know me again?'

Her face fell. 'I did not think of that,' she said despondently.

'I can get over that,' I said, with a sudden inspiration.

Here Boulot's bits of ears pricked up again; the nose of the punt ran softly into the bank, and Vaurel stepped ashore with a bunch of pigeons hanging down at each side of his neck. He had been up the river towards Bency, and so we had not seen him coming.

'Mademoiselle!' he said deferentially, and stood before her cap in hand.

'Prudent, *mon ami*,' she said, with a brighter look in her face, 'I have been making dis-



coveries in your absence.' Vaurel cast a deprecatory glance towards the door of his house. 'No, not about you, *mon ami*. About M. Lamont here. Do you know that he is a relative of my mother?'

'You don't say so, mademoiselle?' he said, in huge surprise.

'And he is coming to stay at the Château, as is only fitting.'

'Truly!' said Vaurel, not over-joyfully. 'But it is I that shall miss him. We have been good friends, monsieur and I. I know a man when I meet one, and so does monsieur.—Is it not so, monsieur?'

'That is so, Vaurel; and we shall be none the less friends, I hope, because I am shifting my quarters.' But Vaurel shook his head doubtfully.

'I must go,' said mademoiselle, 'or they will miss me. When will you arrive, Monsieur Lamont?'

'By this evening's train. I shall run up to Rennes, and send you a telegram from there, and you can send the carriage to meet me.'

'Good!' and she clapped her hands like a child. 'I feel better than I have done since I came here. Adieu, Prudent!—*Au revoir*, Monsieur Lamont!—Good-bye, Boulot!' and she patted the big head which wrinkled up to her touch, and then stepped lightly away into the wood.

'Monsieur is in luck,' said Vaurel when she had gone.

'Mademoiselle is in trouble, my friend; and if I can do anything to assist her I am going to do it. I can count upon you if I need help?'

'To the last drop of my blood—for mademoiselle,' he said.

(To be continued.)

## OLD MAN DAWSON'S 'PLOUGHING BEE.'



HERE was a 'bee' at Old Man Dawson's, on Mosquito Creek, in Alberta, North-west Territory, Canada. Dawson was an old-timer of the old-timers, buffalo-hunter, Indian-fighter, and fur-trader; now he was growing old, and had taken up as a homestead one hundred and sixty acres of wild North-western land.

It may sound very smooth and delightful to speak of 'taking up' a place and 'breaking' so many acres; but, as a sober fact, this little matter of breaking the virgin soil—picturesque phrase!—is not a festive picnic.

Now, a 'bee' is an attempt to turn this breaking business into a festive picnic. It works thus: You have 'a place'—one hundred and sixty acres of Canadian earth, mud, trees, weeds, rocks, and mosquitoes. Vastly proud were you when you 'entered for' your Farm. I spell Farm with a capital F, because that is how you used to think about it. 'There are many fine cotton-wood trees on my Farm;' 'There is a spring on my Farm;' and you figure out on paper that a walk round your Farm is two miles long, and that you are the owner of six million six hundred and ninety-six thousand and six hundred (6,696,600) square feet of this earth. Then you can turn your attention to reckoning the value of prospective crops: so many acres, so many bushels at so much a bushel. It is a fascinating and harmless amusement, and may make you swell visibly with joyful pride; but it will not break your land.

There are, then, three courses open to you: the first is, you may 'rustle' for yourself, and by the sweat of your brow and with the help of

a team and plough (bought on the time system) you may break an insignificant-looking patch of land; the second, you may pay a man three dollars an acre to do the work for you—this is the way of the 'remittance man' and others of his kind; the third and most popular course is to have a 'Ploughing Bee.'

You invite your neighbours to come to your farm on a certain day, and to bring with them their ploughs and teams of horses. Then their part of the programme is to set to work and break your land for you.

In the meantime good ladies of the neighbourhood, ministering angels, are busily at work in your 'shack,' preparing the tables for dinner; some, too, pass up and down the field with drinks for the men who are changing your green, bush-grown, wild land into rich, black, healthy-smelling earth—drinks of cold tea, water, and (whisper this) beer in wooden pails and stuff in bottles. Perhaps the stuff in the wooden pails and in the bottles may explain why some of the furrows look like reeds shaken in the wind; it may also explain why some of the men, when they come in to supper, trip over the doorstep or upset their tea-cups; but it is a jovial, good-natured crowd, which does not transgress the rules of Western etiquette when women are present.

Perhaps some of the men may look unusually solemn; others again may talk somewhat loudly about the number of rounds they made, how Jim Snaffle's team of bays 'led the bee,' and how Long John got stuck in that bluff of willows on the north-east corner; and thus the talk goes on about the thousand-and-one things of interest to the settler in a new country. The tenderfoot

sits still and listens; and while he may profess to despise much of it—as coming from men of

Beefy face and grubby 'and:  
Lor'! what do they understand?

—he yet cannot help admiring the force, the readiness—yes, and the knowledge—which are mastering and are breaking and taming this wild North-west.

All day the 'bee' had been in progress at Old Man Dawson's. He was very popular; many friends had rallied to his call, and a long, broad patch of freshly-turned earth gladdened his eyes when evening came. It had been a most successful 'bee'; the weather had been perfect, a cool breeze keeping down the mosquitoes, and enabling men and horses to work at their best.

Full justice had been done to the stuff in the wooden pails and in the bottles, and a feeling of mellow contentment possessed everybody. Good work had been done that day; now that the evening had come there was to be a dance at Old Man Dawson's house.

The girls of Mosquito Creek were there in full force; and, like all North-western damsels, they were pleasant to look upon, healthy, lively, good-natured, and hearty, with an endless capacity for hard work and an equally endless capacity for play. In staying power they are far superior to the winner of a six days' bicycle race. He might faint from exhaustion if he stood up to all the dances at a North-western dance; but what does a Western girl do? She will drive twenty miles or more to the house; dance with tremendous activity and vim from half-past eight in the evening till six o'clock next morning; keep herself perfectly cool and smiling through all the dust and turmoil of the rout, while strong men are gasping for breath and looking streakily hot; and then she will drive twenty miles home—tired? Not she! Mind you, she has not 'sat out' one dance.

While the girls were arriving, those men who had been ploughing were behind in the stable getting into their best clothes, which they had brought with them in the morning. Other young men were driving up—young men from the Fort, looking rather dressy in their thin shoes, collars, and gaudy ties—and fully conscious of the fact. There, too, was the school-teacher, a lanky, self-satisfied-looking individual, with a high collar and conspicuous cuffs. He was a 'dood' (man of fashion); not a doubt about it, for he wore a 'Chinese biled shirt' on all occasions; and there was an awful legend to the effect that he owned a tooth-brush, and that he varnished his yellow shoes. Down with such base truckling to the conventionalities of the effete East!

There were also other young men there—dusky half-breeds, black-haired and bright-eyed, stepping with easy, cat-like grace with their moccasined feet.

Then there were the wall-flowers. These are

always men at a Western dance, for a woman must be over one hundred years old, deaf, blind, and completely paralytic before she will sit out a dance in the North-west. So the wall-flowers were heavy-booted youths, slow of speech, sitting like graven images on the benches round the room.

Of men at a Western dance there is never any lack—men of all kinds, shapes, and sizes; a motley and a cosmopolitan crowd: young Englishmen with histories; young Englishmen without histories or *h's*, stolid, bovine; Scotchmen, both Lowlanders and Highlanders; Irishmen with the ready jest; French Canadians, black-eyed, gesticulating, good dancers these; young men from Eastern Canada; Parry Sounders; and fish-eaters from Newfoundland; and all bent upon enjoying themselves and having 'a good time.'

Next, the ladies! The chief thing to be noticed is that there are not enough of them; there never is. Married or single, the ladies are there to dance. You will see the house-mother, with half-a-dozen grown up sons and daughters, tripping it as lightly and as untiringly as the schoolgirl. Babies are wrapped in shawls and laid on the bed, or given to their fathers to hold while the mothers dance.

'Partners for a quadrille!' shouts the self-appointed Master of the Ceremonies, a big half-breed, with shining face and eyes sparkling with excitement.

Then follows a rush to secure partners. It is considered the proper thing for the young man who has brought a lady to a dance to dance first with her; after that he is free to choose other partners; but a lady is bound, by the rules of Western etiquette, to refuse no man who asks her to dance with him. This is a law which must not be broken.

There is room on the floor to dance two sets of a quadrille, and eight couples are standing in order as the fiddler strikes up.

'Honour your partners!' 'Corners the same!' 'First couple, lead to the right; four hands round!' And so the dance goes on, the caller shouting his directions, and now and then piloting and putting straight a dancer who is going astray. When he says, 'Swing your partner!' do it—not a delicate touching of finger-tips at arm's-length, but take the lady's waist in a strong embrace, and whirl her vigorously round, off her feet if you can, and she will not object. This is no languid walking through a quadrille, but a dance; stamp your feet; kick up the dust. 'Grand Right and Left!'

Watch that half-breed dancing with the light-footed Irish girl; that is dancing; music is in their feet. Look out for this heavy-booted Parry Sounder who is 'promenading' behind you with the mother of fourteen young Canadians. Look out for him; he will kick your heels off

if you do not get out of his way with your partner, a dark-eyed maiden whose dash of Indian blood accounts for the supple gracefulness of her figure.

'Promenade all; you know where!' shouts the caller. 'This is a delicate hint that that dance is over, and you lead the lady to a seat, gasp out 'Thank you,' and make a dash for the open door to try to cool off. While you are doing this another dance will be in progress, and through the clouds of dust you will see your late partner being whirled round by a member of the North-west Mounted Police.

Dance follows dance; now it is a waltz, in which some of the tireless girls, lacking partners, waltz with each other; now it is a jig, and this is where some of the half-breeds shine. Have you ever seen the 'Red River Jig' danced by half-breeds?

'The next dance will be a song!'—so says the facetious Master of the Revels. It is an old, old jest, yet it never fails to raise a laugh, even the graven images on the benches joining in with a hoarse guffaw.

'Song from Miss Cavalle!'

Miss Cavalle bashfully tries to run out of the room, but is easily caught and brought back in triumph.

'Really, I cannot sing. I would rather not. Please excuse me. I have a very bad cold.'

'Nonsense! nonsense! Song from Miss Cavalle!'

'Put your cold in your pocket!'

Thus adjured, Miss Cavalle, without accompaniment, begins to trill forth a ballad about a certain young man

With a little black moustache;  
And every time he looked at me  
My heart went like a flash.

It appears from the poem that the faithless swain deserted her for a 'sour old maid with lots of cash'—to rhyme with the 'little black moustache.'

Thunders of applause break forth as she concludes with the warning 'to all you girls,' &c., not to fall in love with a stylish 'dood with a little black moustache.'

Oh yes, the North-west is sudden death to 'doods.' Then Mr Johnny Meech, who has been sleeping off the effects of the stuff in the wooden pails and in the bottles, is asked to oblige the company with a song. Evidently he expected this, for he at once begins to warble a plaintive ditty of forty stanzas, mainly about nothing. He has forgotten the tune—if it ever had one—and many of the words; but that does not hinder him, for it really does not matter if half the words be left out, or all of them. Everything, however, must come to an end. Mr Meech pauses, and some one sitting next to him asks, 'Is that all?' 'Yes,' says Mr Meech, 'that's all.' Then, and not till then, does the applause break forth.

Honest folk! kindly folk! I wonder if any of them perceived the delicious irony of applauding when they heard that that was all.

Then Miss Cavalle, forgetting her cold, consents to sing another ballad. This tells the long and affecting tale of a sailor-man who met, in a coconut grove, a dusky young woman, 'the fair maid of Bohee,' a forward damsel, who invited the wanderer into her hut and made him a proposal of marriage.

Great applause follows this song, after which there are more dances, quadrilles and Circassian circles. About half-past twelve we have supper. The ladies of the house go round the room with teapots of strong tea and plates of cake—cake of many kinds, sweet, sticky stuff. One of the wall-flowers on the bench close beside me devours no less than fourteen different species of cake, washed down with three or four cups of tea.

After supper we have the 'Rabbit Dance.' This is a Northern dance, and it is eminently suited to a cold climate, as any one who has taken part in it will confess. But imagine it on a warm night in the later part of June, in a small log-shack, with the dust rising in choking clouds!

The dancers form up on the floor in two parallel ranks, facing each other, the men standing in one, the women in the other. Then the pair at the head of the line join hands, and with a peculiar, skipping step, dance down the centre twice, then separate, the man dancing alone at the back of one line, the woman doing the same at the back of the other line, till they arrive at the bottom, where they meet, join hands again, and dance to the top, and once more separate.

Then the fun begins, for the girl starts off alone and the man has to catch her. This may sound easy; but just try it. A little room which seems to be full of chairs, benches, and people's feet; a blinding dust; two lines of mocking men and women—you must not break through the lines—and a laughing girl, your 'rabbit,' supple and full of vim, skipping gracefully away from you as you plunge about, run into the wall, or fall over an intercepting foot: these are some of the features of the famous 'Rabbit Dance.'

After the first 'rabbit' has been caught, she and her partner take their places at the bottom of the rows, and the second pair start out on their journey; this is repeated until all the 'rabbits' have been caught. Then they begin anew, with this difference, that now the 'rabbit' has to catch the man; and she generally does it in quick time.

The onlookers shout encouragement to the dancers, mixed with criticism: 'That ain't the Rabbit Dance! You mustn't run; skip, skip like a rabbit! Keep time to the music!'

Then more quadrilles; the lamps are put out,



and streaks of sunlight shine through the window panes. The big 'caller-off' has been getting rather hoarse, and has resigned in favour of a pale, straw-coloured youth with wispy hair. This callow young man had brought himself into notice by coming out of a fit of abstraction and droning forth, in a most lugubrious tone of voice, an alleged comic song. After having thus contributed to the evening's hilarity he relapsed into melancholy efforts to keep alight a wheezy pipe until he was summoned to 'call off' for the dancers.

The sun is shining brightly now; thoughts of cows to be milked and other 'chores' to be done cause the people to begin to get ready to go home. The men go outside and hitch up the patient horses that have been fighting with mosquitoes or standing in the evil-smelling

smoke of the 'smudges' during the long, weary hours.

Some of the people go away in bumping, creaking wagons, some on horseback, and some happy couples in buggies and buckboards.

Mrs Grundy was not there; in fact she seldom appears at dances in the North-west.

Miss Cavalle, basely deserting the youth who brought her to the dance, is driven to her home by a dashing young farmer, one of the Beau Brummells of the neighbourhood, the owner of a whole section, fenced, with a frame-house upon it.

Old Man Dawson's Bee has ended; everybody has had 'a good time.'

There is plenty of hard work in the North-west; but the hardest work of all is to be seen at a North-western dance.

## A R R E C I F O S.

### CHAPTER X.—THE 'LITTLE CELEBRATION' COMES OFF.



BRIGHT flame lit up the black line of palms on the island, and then another, as two fires shone brightly out upon the beach and continued to burn steadily.

'Ah!' said the Greek, who just then came on deck, 'the Kanakas will hava gooda time to-nighta—pork, turtle, biskeet, feesh, everythings. They are alla gooda comrade to-night too;' and he showed his teeth in a hideous grimace which was intended for a friendly smile for the chief-officer.

Supper was late that night on board the *Mahina*; for Mosé, the brown-skinned Manihiki steward, was, aided by the cook, preparing such a supper as had never before been seen on the brig—at least so he told Rawlings, who had cheerfully agreed that eight o'clock was not too late. At half-past seven Rawlings himself came below to see the table and Mosé's ideas of decoration.

'Why, Mosé, you're quite an artist,' he said as he went into his stateroom. 'Keep the lager as cool as you can. Put half-a-dozen bottles and some hock on the poop with some wet towels round them. We'll be up late to-night.'

'Yes, sir,' answered the man, and as he turned away a grim smile for a second flitted across his swarthy features.

Eight bells struck, and as Rawlings, Barradas, and the Greek took their seats at the cabin table, Barry came out of his own cabin and sat at the forward end of the table. Rawlings was opposite him, and the Greek and Barradas also faced each other.

As the steward brought in the turtle-soup, there came the strains of a wheezy accordion from the main-deck, and then three or four voices joined in a native chorus, broken now and then by a

laugh, and the sounds of naked feet stamping time to the music.

'Hullo!' observed the Greek, with his usual grin. 'Billy Onotoa and the other fella on boarda are hava a bita sing-songa and dansa too.'

'Let them enjoy themselves to-night,' said Rawlings pleasantly. 'And, steward, send them up a bottle of grog. When the rest of them come aboard they shall have half-a-dozen bottles between them. It won't hurt them once in a while.'

The bottle of grog seemed to have a rapidly stimulating effect on the men on deck, for the 'harmony' began with renewed vigour; and amid it all, as Billy Onotoa and four other of his shipmates thumped their feet and slapped their bare chests and chanted their song louder than before, two score of naked figures climbed softly over the bulwarks, and with scarce a shuffle of foot disappeared forward and crouched in silence under the darkened topgallant fore'sle. The door of the sail-locker slid back, and three feminine forms, one of which was clothed, stole quietly in. Velo, with a pistol in his belt and his finger to his lips, crouched before it, and listened to the murmur of voices from the cabin.

Rawlings was in such excellent spirits that he could not refrain from 'chaffing' his chief-officer upon his want of appetite, and kept pressing him to drink.

'My dear Barry,' he said, 'you really want livening up. You have worked too hard altogether, and seem a bit run down. Come, if you won't drink lager, try a glass of hock.'

'Yesa,' said the Greek, with the grin that was so intolerable to the man he meant to murder, 'you have worka too harda, Mr Barry. Ah! when you get to Singapore you will feela betta;

there is fine prawn curry there in Singapore—make you feel stronga. Make you feela you wanta come back quick to Arrecifos and find more pearla.'

Barry looked up wearily, but for the twentieth part of a second his eye met that of Mosé the steward, who slipped behind the Greek's chair and filled his glass.

'No, thank you,' he said to Rawlings; 'I won't drink anything just now. I feel a bit of a headache. I'll sit on the transoms a bit, and get a breath of fresh air from the stern port.'

He rose from his seat and walked toward the stern; but as he was about to pass Rawlings his left arm shot out like lightning and seized the captain by the throat; and at the same instant Barradas, rising to his feet, leant across the table and struck the Greek a fearful blow between the eyes. There was no need for the steward's help—the man went down like a stone dropped into a well.

Then came a sudden blaze of lights, a rush of naked feet, wild cries, and an English cheer from Joe and the white seamen, as the cabin was filled with the excited crew and their island allies.

Rawlings lay gasping upon the cushioned transoms, with Barry standing over him; the Greek had been dragged up into a sitting posture, and placed with his back against a cabin door, whilst Barradas proceeded to handcuff and leg-iron him. Then, together with Velo, who was carrying another set of irons, the second-mate came toward Barry and Rawlings.

'This fellow's pretty little hands and feet are too small for them,' said Barry. 'Carry him up on deck, you, Velo and Joe, and wait till he comes to. Then lash his hands athwartships behind his back, and take him and the Greek ashore. Keep a good lookout over them, and see that they have water to drink when they ask for it. They will swing at the gallows for their crimes. Let us be as merciful to them as we can; but for God's sake take them away from here quickly; their very presence poisons me. Barradas, come here; give me your hand again. Down on your knees and thank God that the woman you thought was murdered is alive *and is here.*'

The Spaniard looked at him with pale face and shaking limbs. 'What do you mean?' he asked hoarsely.

'I mean that Mrs Tracey is not dead; and she has forgiven you. Stay here.'

He waited until Rawlings and the Greek were carried on deck, and then motioned to Mosé the steward.

A quick step sounded on the companion-ladder, and Mrs Tracey was in the cabin. Barradas was sitting at the table, with his hands over his eyes.

She placed her hand upon his shoulder and

said softly, 'As Christ forgives us all, so may He forgive you, Manuel Barradas; and so may He forgive those who'—

Barry stole swiftly up on deck, and left them together.'

#### CHAPTER XL.—CAPTAIN BARRY WITH A FULL PURSE AND A LIGHT HEART.

**E**ARLY on the following morning there was great bustle and excitement both on board the *Mahina* and on the beach of the south-eastern island. The two large boats were loaded with stores and sent ashore, for Mrs Tracey and Barry had decided to take possession of Arrecifos by virtue of the protection order given to Tracey in Sydney by the Commodore, which had been found in Rawlings's cabin together with all the other papers belonging to the dead captain. Velo, with six men, was to remain, and with the help of the willing Tebuan people, to continue to dive for shell, and await the return of the brig in six months' time.

So at nine o'clock the red ensign of England was run up on a flag-pole in the centre of the little village, amid the cheers of the crew—cheers which were bitter to the ears of the two men who were lying bound and guarded in one of the native huts, awaiting to be taken on board again.

Then came the time when Barry and Mrs Tracey had to say farewell to their brown-skinned friends; and they had to shake hands with every man, woman, and child. The prisoners were first sent off; and Barradas, taking no heed of their savage curses and murderous looks, saw that they were placed in the deck-house, and a sentry placed over them. Their leg-irons Barry intended to remove once the brig was clear of the land.

Velo, ever-faithful Velo, wrung Barry's hand again and again; for, proud as he was of being placed in charge of the island, his distress at parting from him was very great.

'There, good-bye once more, Velo. Don't work too hard; and if a man-of-war comes, be sure you go on board and give the captain that letter. Come, Mrs Tracey, we must be going. See! Barradas is already hove short, and waiting for us.'

Helping Mrs Tracey into the whale-boat, Barry followed and grasped the long steer-oar.

'Give it to her, men; there's the brig breaking her heart to get away.'

The light boat shot out like an arrow, and was soon alongside, and Mrs Tracey was met at the gangway by Joe and another white seaman, both dressed in new duck suits given them by Barradas; but, instead of going into the cabin, Mrs Tracey waited at the gangway for Barry.

'I want to welcome the new captain of my

ship,' she said, with a smile, as she held out her hand to him.

'Thank you, madam;' and Barry raised his hat to her in such a formal manner that she laughed again, and asked him if he was afraid of the brig's owner; and Joe winked atrociously at Sam Button, and said in a loud whisper, 'He's a lucky cove—e is, Sam. W'y 'e can marry the howner for the arskin'. I can see it hin 'er eye, stickin' out a foot.'

'Man the windlass again, Mr Barradas;' and Barry, with a happy smile, sprang on the poop and himself took the wheel.

Up came the anchor from the coral bed in which it had lain for so many months, and ten minutes later the *Mahina* was slipping through the smooth water of the lagoon towards the passage. Another hour, with every stitch of her white cotton canvas shining bright in the glorious noonday sun, and she was dashing over the long mountain swell of the North Pacific, and heading south before the lusty trade-wind.

For thirteen days the *Mahina* ran southward, till she was in sight of Nitendi, one of the Santa Cruz group; and off Nitendi she met Her Majesty's gunboat *Reynard*, which was employed in patrolling the New Hebrides. Barry signalled that he desired to communicate; and, going on board, he had a long conversation with the commander, to whom he told the strange story of the *Mahina*.

'Well, I'll take your prisoners from you, Mr Barry, as you have made the request. I am bound to Noumea, and from there I can send them on to Sydney for the trial. I wish I could dispose of them both in the good old-fashioned style, by dangling them from the end of the yardarm. Now as to this other man Barradas—he seems to have made all the amends possible in his power; but nevertheless he certainly was their accomplice in the piracy of the vessel. This may mean from two to five years' imprisonment—unless,' he added carelessly, 'he runs away before you get to Sydney.'

A boat was sent from the warship, and Rawlings and the Greek, still wearing their irons, were handed over to the officer in charge. Not once during the voyage had Barry spoken to them; and now, though he did not know it, he was looking at them for the last time. In half-an-hour the two vessels had parted again. That night as the brig was moving quietly through the water, and Barradas had just relieved Joe (who was now second-mate), the captain came and stood beside him, and began to speak to him in low but earnest tones. The Spaniard listened intently, but shook his head every now and then in dissent.

'I cannot do anything like that, sir. I am no longer the poor trembling coward, but ready to meet my punishment, whatever it may be.

No, sir; I must stick to the ship and be a man.'

One day, nearly a month after the brig had spoken the *Reynard*, old Watson walked into the big room of the Sydney Merchants' Exchange, as he had done the first thing every morning for some weeks, and scanned the 'arrivals' board; for the letters which Barry had written to him and Rose Maynard had come safely to hand nearly six weeks before. Almost the first notice that met his eye was this: '*Brig flying Hawaiian Islands' colours entered 8.45.*' The old man tossed his hat up to the ceiling and gave a loud hurrah.

'Hullo, Jimmy! what's up?' said an acquaintance whom he ran up against at the door, and nearly knocked down in his eagerness to get out again.

'That brig I was looking out for has just come in. I'm off to tell the girl first, and take her aboard.'

In another twenty minutes he was tugging at Mr Maynard's bell. Rose came to the door, and knew by his face that he was the bearer of good news.

'It's all right, miss! The brig is in, and anchored by now. Will you come aboard with me? Do, now.'

Rose laughed. 'Mr Barry won't want ladies on board just now, Mr Watson.'

'Well, well, miss, just as you please. Any message for him.'

'Yes,' she replied; 'tell him that my father and I will be waiting for him outside the Custom-House, and that he must bring Mrs Tracey with him, and that there is a room all ready for her, for she must stay here.' Then she darted away to dress and call her father. The old mate hurried off to the quay, hailed a boat, and was soon on board and shaking hands with Barry, who was only waiting to accompany Mrs Tracey on shore.

'The lady is well, and blooming like a rose; and the old gentleman is in good fettle too. We got your letters six weeks ago by the Yankee whalers. I saw the lady just now;' and then he gave Barry Rose's message.

'Here I am to receive the message myself,' said Mrs Tracey, coming out of her cabin, and shaking hands with the old seaman. 'You are Mr Watson? I guessed it was you when I heard your voice. I shall gladly accept Miss Maynard's invitation, if she will have me for a few days. Oh, I'm dying to even speak to a white woman again!'

'Just so, ma'am,' said Watson. Then turning to Barry again, 'But wait a bit; I haven't told you all the news. Rawlings and the other chap are dead.'

'Dead!'

'Ay; both of 'em.'

'How do you know?' asked Barry quickly.



'The *Eclipse* man-of-war brought the news from Noumea last week. Here's the account of it.' He spread a newspaper out on the table, and pointed to an article headed 'Tragedy in the South Seas.' Mrs Tracy and Barry read it together:

'Just as the *Eclipse* was leaving New Caledonia the gunboat *Reynard* arrived, and reported having spoken the Hawaiian brig *Mahina* in the vicinity of the Banks group. The acting-master informed the commander of the gunboat that he had on board in confinement two men who some months previously had murdered the captain of the brig and seized the vessel. By the aid of some natives the chief-officer succeeded in retaking her, and the two men were overpowered and placed in heavy irons. Commander Wrayburn of the *Reynard* consented to take charge of them, as the brig was deeply laden, and likely to make a long passage to Sydney. They were at once transferred to the gunboat, which then proceeded on her voyage to Noumea.

'About a week afterwards one of the two, a powerfully-built Italian or Greek, who was of a sullen and savage disposition, was relieved of his irons for half-an-hour by the doctor's orders, and placed on deck with his companion, as he complained of a severe pain in his chest. This was evidently a ruse; for, while the sentry's back was turned for a moment, the Greek seized his fellow-pirate (who was in irons) by the waist, and leapt overboard with him. They sank immediately, the Greek no doubt having determined to drown with the other man.

'Fuller particulars of the seizure of the brig and her recapture will be looked forward to with interest on her arrival here. It is stated that she has a cargo of "golden edge" pearl-shell worth over forty thousand pounds.'

Mrs Tracey shuddered and covered her face with her hands. 'Heaven forgive them their crimes,' she murmured.

Barry could not help a certain feeling of relief. Both he and Mrs Tracey had looked forward to the

trial of Rawlings and the Greek with the utmost aversion; for, heartless villains and murderers as they were, their death at the hands of the law haunted Mrs Tracey like a nightmare; and Barradas himself had a growing horror of the coming time, for on his evidence alone Rawlings would certainly be hanged.

'I must tell Barradas,' said Barry. 'Steward, send the mate here.'

The Spaniard heard in silence, bent his head and crossed himself, and quietly went on deck again. He knew that in a few hours, or a day or so at most, he would be arrested, but knew also that his conduct since the murder of Captain Tracey would go largely in his favour, and that in both Barry and Mrs Tracey he had friends. As for attempting to escape, he had put the thought away at once and for ever the night he walked to the little island cemetery.

Here, as my story draws to an end, let me tell what became of Manuel Barradas. He stood his trial, and came off with a light sentence. Two years later he was back on Arrecifos Lagoon, overseer, in charge of the famous pearling station owned by 'Tracey & Barry,' where he remained for long, long years, happy and contented, and with his mind at rest.

It is ten o'clock at night, and a quiet but happy group are seated in Mr Maynard's sitting-room. Barry is retelling the story of the voyage of the *Mahina* to the old gentleman, and big, red-faced, and rumbling-voiced Jim Watson now and then puts in a question, as, with a long tumbler at his elbow, he puffs at a huge cigar. At the other end of the room Mrs Tracey is sitting with Rose Maynard's head leaning on her shoulder.

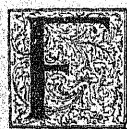
'When is it to be, Rose?' and Mrs Tracey tries to make the girl lift her face; 'come, tell me. Indeed, you must, for although he will be *your* husband, he will always be *my* captain—at least, I hope so.

Rose blushes. 'Next week,' she whispers.

THE END.

## THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

### THE PROTECTION OF WILD ANIMALS.



FOR many years naturalists have pleaded for a sanctuary for the wild animals of Africa, many of which are, owing to the greed of hunters, threatened with extinction.

Happily we are now within measurable distance of the realisation of this wise suggestion, for a convention was recently signed by the different European nations interested in 'the Dark Continent,' by which full protection will be given to various birds, beasts, and fishes

within a prescribed and immense area. The convention prohibits the hunting and destruction of certain scheduled animals, and provides for the establishment of reserves and a close season. The use of nets or pitfalls is forbidden for taking animals, and fishes must not be killed by explosives or drugs. Export duties will be levied on the hides of giraffes, antelopes, zebras, &c., and the killing of young elephants is prohibited under severe penalties. There are also clauses which protect the eggs of ostriches, and others which encourage the destruction of the eggs of crocodiles, poisonous snakes, and those of pythons. The

contracting parties further undertake to apply, as far as possible in their respective possessions, measures calculated to encourage the domestication of zebras, elephants, ostriches, &c. It will thus be seen that this particular European concert is likely to result in a vast amount of good.

#### A DARING EXPERIMENT.

In order to settle the important question whether malaria is spread, as suspected, by the bite of the mosquito, two Englishmen, Dr Louis Sambon and Dr Low, are about to proceed to the Roman Campagna in order to put the matter to the test of practical experience. They are to live in this fever-stricken district for six months, mixing freely with the populace during the day, but shut up in a mosquito-proof house at night. This house will be protected by fine wire-gauze, through which the insects cannot enter. If the inmates escape malaria—living as they will, save for the protection of the wire-gauze, under the same conditions as the stricken peasantry—it may be considered a certainty that the disease is spread by the mosquitoes. However, there will be a further test. The doctors will rear some mosquitoes, and some thirty or forty of the insects, after being allowed to bite a malaria patient, will be sent to London and set free in a room where some students will be sleeping; and if these self-sacrificing individuals show, in ten days or so, symptoms of the disease, the matter will be proved beyond doubt. The heroism of the two men who are willing to risk their lives in the service of their fellow-men by voluntary exile to such a fever-den as the Roman Campagna is beyond praise. It requires something more than a Victoria Cross for due recognition.

#### AN ELECTRIC FIRE-ALARM.

An exceedingly effective automatic fire annunciator has been devised by Mr May, of New Zealand, and the fire-brigades there are reported to have a very good opinion of it. The apparatus is comparatively simple in character, and consists mainly of a slender copper or silver wire, which is placed near the ceiling of the room to be protected. This wire is horizontal in position, may be of any convenient length, and is attached to fixed supports at each end. It is obvious that such a wire will stretch and consequently sag in the centre under the action of heat, and a small rise in temperature will cause it to do so. At its central point, where this downward movement will be most apparent, there is a weight attached, the lower point of which impinges upon an adjustable platinum contact-point contained in a glass tube. In this manner an electrical circuit is completed, a bell can be rung at a distant point—say the fire-brigade station—and at the same time, by means of a Morse receiver, a code-signal showing the particular house where the danger threatens is conveyed to the officials. We

suggest that a modification of the arrangement could well be used for automatically opening a ventilator when a room becomes inconveniently hot.

#### THE BATTLE OF THE PAVEMENTS.

Municipal bodies all the world over have for years been trying to solve the problem of finding the best form of paving for our street roadways, and there are advocates on the side of asphalt as there are on the side of wood. It is, therefore, interesting to refer to a report recently submitted to the London Corporation by their engineer, Mr D. J. Ross, which deals with the comparative durability and cost of the two materials in question. Deal wood has been in use since 1871, and in streets subject to heavy traffic has to be relaid in from five to seven years. The Australian hardwood did not seem to him to be as durable as anticipated, and in some parts of London it had been removed and the deal wood substituted for it. Asphalt had been in use in the City since 1869, and in minor streets, where the traffic was small, it had been down for thirty years. In the Poultry—where the traffic is exceptionally heavy—it did not require renewal for nineteen years. He reported in favour of the use of asphalt rather than wood in a thoroughfare like Holborn Viaduct, where twelve thousand vehicles passed over the roadway in twelve hours. The cost of asphalt was almost identical with that of hardwood paving.

#### IRRIGATION IN PALESTINE.

With the introduction of machinery much that is picturesque in life must necessarily disappear, as we are reminded in our own country, for example, by the substitution for 'Humphry with his flail' of the threshing-machine, and of the equally unlovely steam-plough for the ploughman and his team. It is the same in far-off Palestine, where the water-wheel, with its team of mules, is being replaced by the oil-engine. Watching the former method of drawing water from the wells for irrigating the land was pleasant to the eye of an artist; but the work was laborious and costly. With an oil-engine of six-horse power it is possible to pump double the quantity of water previously raised by eight mules, while the expense is about the same. It is unfortunately a foregone conclusion that the picturesque must suffer when it becomes expensive to maintain.

#### A FORAGE FACTORY.

When railways first came to be established there were gloomy forebodings that horse traction would be altogether superseded; but it is now evident that the railways have had the effect of adding greatly to the number of vehicles which crowd our streets, and the railway companies themselves are among the largest employers of horse-labour. In order to feed their immense stud of horses,

the Great Eastern Railway Company have recently erected at Romford, Essex, a factory for the preparation of fodder. This factory is fitted with machinery of the most modern type, which deals with two classes of material—hay or clover and grain (oats, beans, and maize). The principal part of the plant is devoted to the treatment of the grain, which is weighed—half-a-ton at a time—and then passed through a series of sifters, which eliminate all foreign matters and impurities, the final operation being its submission to the magnetic separator, which takes up the particles of wire, nails, and screws always mixed with grain in astonishing quantity. Finally, the grain is crushed and then mixed with the chaff, which has previously been cut and otherwise prepared. There are in this unique factory separate sets of sifters and crushers for each kind of grain, and the materials can be mixed automatically in any proportions required. The entire machinery is driven by a powerful horizontal engine.

#### A COSTLY MAP.

Among the wonderful treasures which are gathered together at the Paris Exposition is a map which rivals in its intrinsic value the contents of many notable jewel-cases. It is a map of France, not printed or drawn like ordinary maps, but made up of the noble metals and studded with precious stones. The chief towns of France, to the number of one hundred and six, are represented by costly gems set in gold, Paris naturally taking the premier position with a fine rubellite. The colours of the mineral kingdom are as rich and diversified as those found in flowers, and thus it is not difficult, when expense is no object, to find in stones tints of all hues. In this unique map of France variety is secured by the employment of such minerals as the emerald, its paler sister the beryl, the sapphire, tourmaline, amethyst, chrysolite, chrysoberyl, and many more whose names are less familiar. In this wonderful map the rivers are made of platinum.

#### A WATERLESS FOUNTAIN.

Another novelty at the Paris Exposition which attracts much attention is a fountain which plays in the section known as 'Spain in the Time of the Moors.' The first intention was that this fountain should be of the ordinary character but of unusual size; difficulties, however, came in the way which seemed insuperable, and M. Trouvé, the engineer in charge, suggested a substitute for water which has proved to be a great success. The fountain is now a dry one, and it will be seen that the method adopted in its operation is only applicable to situations under cover. There is a jet tube, below which is a powerful electric fan and an arc lamp. This fan projects a jet of air through the tube, and the air carries with it a constantly supplied stream of rice-grains, mingled with spangles of metal foil and particles

of glittering mica, which sparkle with splendid effect in the beams of the arc lamp. The fountain basin is so arranged that the constituents of the glittering stream as they fall are constantly drawn within the influence of the electric fan, so that they do duty over and over again.

#### PROTECTION FROM CORROSION OF SHIPS' HULLS.

A German technical paper describes a new method of protecting a ship's hull from both corrosion and adhesion of marine growths, which constitute such a frequent cause of reduced speed. The great essential is a composition which will, besides affording certain protection, dry smoothly and rapidly. The process described is that of Rahtjen, and commences with the application of a coating of shellac in alcohol, with which is incorporated a little iron oxide, and some linseed-oil to furnish elasticity. A general coating follows of the same composition, to which has been added a mercuric salt, which under the action of the sea-water leads to the formation of corrosive sublimate. This poisonous coating is partly soluble, and to a certain extent wears away; but, while any mercury remains, the marine organisms which ordinarily cling to a ship's bottom are conspicuous only by their absence. Even when the poisonous coating altogether disappears, the hull is still protected from corrosion by the initial coat of shellac varnish.

#### LITHOGRAPHIC STONE.

In spite of the introduction of new methods of illustrating books, the lithographic process still holds its own for a variety of purposes in the printing-office; and it is a curious fact that a small region in and around the village of Solenhofen in Bavaria is the world's depôt for the particular kind of stone employed in the process. There is no fear that the supply of stone from this source will be exhausted—at any rate, not for two hundred years to come. It is only the stone which comes up to a certain standard which is used for lithographic work, the rest being employed for building, and the best kind is the blue or gray variety. This kind is harder and will allow of more impressions being taken from it than stones of inferior quality; moreover, it can be worked from both sides, which is a necessity in the case of certain lithographic machines. The value of the annual yield of lithographic stones in this Bavarian quarry amounts to about one hundred and twenty thousand pounds.

#### AUTOMATIC BOOT-CLEANER.

A machine has been invented for cleaning boots automatically, and it should find favour in hotels and schools, where much muscular energy is at present expended in such work. The boots, on the feet or on lasts, are in turn inserted



into three separate openings, and revolving brushes clean off the mud, apply the blacking, and polish the boot. This machine will doubtless prove of service as long as existing conditions prevail; but surely the time will soon come when the laborious process of polishing foot-gear will be improved upon. It ought not to be beyond the efforts of an ingenious inventor to devise some simple fluid which will at once give a boot the necessary 'shine' without any polishing whatever. We believe that such compounds have already been made; but the suspicion that they have a deteriorating action on the leather of the boots retards their general adoption.

#### BLAST-FURNACE SLAG CEMENT.

At a recent meeting of the Iron and Steel Institute a paper was read by Ritter von Schwarz on the utilisation of blast-furnace slag as cement. In the process employed the slag is first of all reduced to the condition of sand, and after admixture with limestone and slaked lime it is ground to a fine powder. The next operation is to add a small proportion of water and form the mixture into bricks, which are air-dried and subsequently burnt in a kiln to clinker. After being stored for about six weeks this clinker is ground into fine powder, and can then be used as cement. This cement is of exceptional tensile strength, and will resist compression to a remarkable degree.

#### MEASURING A LIGHTNING-FLASH.

A German astronomer has been endeavouring to measure the width of a streak of lightning; and he tells us that the particular flash which allowed itself to be so measured proved to be about five millimetres—that is, one-fifth of an inch—across. There is no known method of obtaining such a result direct, and the calculator was forced to depend upon a photograph, which, curiously enough, included both a building and the flash that struck the building at the moment the lens was uncovered. This picture was taken from a window of the Hamburg Observatory; and as the distance of the building struck, together with the focal length of the lens, was known, it was not a difficult matter to arrive at the result given. It is not the first time that this experiment has been tried under much the same conditions and with a similar result. The German astronomer makes the assertion that a lightning-streak may be considerably widened by being acted upon laterally by a strong wind.

#### RAISED FROM THE SEA.

A novel method of making a new suburb to the city of New York is now in progress. The rapid growth of the population there has reduced the amount of available building-land to a minimum; and, in order to meet the requirements of the builders, new land is now literally being pumped

from the bed of the sea at the Nassau Beach, in Long Island, not far from Brooklyn. In order to carry out this work a powerful suction-dredger raises the submerged gravel at the rate of eighteen thousand cubic yards per day. This loose soil, pumped up through twelve-inch pipes with five times its bulk of water, is spread over the salt-marshes which abound on this coast, raising the land to six feet above high-water level. The water raised with the soil flows back to the sea by a circuitous route, and the solid matter gradually settles down into a compact mass fit for building-sites. The new suburb will be in direct communication with Brooklyn and New York by means of a handsome promenade and by an electric railway.

#### LEAD-POISONING IN THE POTTERIES.

Some time ago a great outcry was made with regard to the use of lead for glazing purposes in our potteries, it being alleged that the action of this metal was most prejudicial to the workpeople. By the action of the Home Office an inquiry into the matter was instituted; and Professor Thorpe, under whose auspices this inquiry was conducted, has recently given at the Royal Institution, London, a full account of what has been done, in the form of a lecture entitled 'Pottery and Plumbism.' The main results of the inquiry seem to be that lead glazes are very convenient in use, but that their advantages are purchased at the cost of much physical suffering to the operatives; that in Continental manufactories a form of metal known as 'fritted lead' is employed, and to its use may be traced the comparative freedom from lead-poisoning enjoyed by the greater number of foreign factories; that so long as lead compounds are employed complete immunity from plumbism can never be secured; and that such compounds can be dispensed with, for leadless glazes of great brilliancy, covering power, and durability, and adapted to all kinds of domestic and sanitary ware, are now within the reach of the manufacturer. The London School Board are showing a good example by inserting a clause in all specifications for new works strictly prohibiting the use of any pottery goods glazed by means of lead.

#### A PETRIFIED FOREST.

We have often read in the fascinating tales of the *Thousand and One Nights* of remarkable mountains of gold and valleys of precious stones containing wealth inexhaustible; but perhaps we have not even heard that there is in America a place which is peculiarly reminiscent of them. This is the petrified forest of Arizona, which, being the only one of its kind, can rightly be considered as a wonder. Locally, the forest is very appropriately named Chalcedony Park. For miles around the ground is covered with enormous logs petrified to the core, which lie where they fell centuries, perhaps ages, ago, and dazzle the

eye on a fine bright day with the most beautiful colours. Some resemble the amethyst, some smoky topaz, while others appear as pure and as white as alabaster. In places chips of the agate cover the ground to the depth of one foot, and it is easy to pick from them cross-sections showing distinctly every vein and even the bark of the original wood. One gigantic tree spanning a 'gulch' forty feet wide is undoubtedly the only bridge of agate in the world; and, though it has been in the same peculiar position for centuries, it is quite firm, and strong enough to endure for as long a period.

Naturally geologists have been speculating as to the reason why such a large area of forest became petrified. The most feasible theory is that the great plain, now five thousand feet above sea-level, was at one time covered by a forest, which was submerged in water strongly charged with minerals until the fibres of the trees were thoroughly soaked and transformed into agate. Even now there are many trunks packed in a deposit of fine clay, which, it is conjectured, was left by the receding waters; but the erosion of the wind has pulverised much of the clay and carried it away in the air.

It is scarcity, and not intrinsic worth, that enhances the value of precious stones; therefore it is quite obvious that, with almost an unlimited supply at hand, costing nothing but the labour of picking, the price agate can command will not be very high. Some of the finer specimens, when mounted by jewellers, are costly; but the greater quantity of the stone is converted into table-tops and similar articles, for which a smooth slab is necessary, and it is even used for building purposes. Indeed, a company has been formed in Denver for cutting and polishing the stone for architectural and decorative work; and more than one building in Denver is faced with agate. Not very long ago a motion was made in the United States Senate for a law to prohibit spoliation of the wonderful work of nature; but, strange to say, the motion was not adopted. Evidently the general utility of the stone was considered of more consequence than the mere aspect and uniqueness of the forest. However, time will tell; perhaps a century hence the petrified forest will be as extinct as the dodo.

#### MINE VENTILATION.

Piping made of sailcloth and impregnated with india-rubber is being manufactured by a Düsseldorf firm for use in mines for ventilation. These are said to be much cheaper than piping made of wood or zinc. The pipes are provided at intervals with steel rings to prevent them from kinking, and they are secured to the shafts and passages by means of galvanised iron rings. These cloth pipes can be easily handled and transported; and one great advantage in their employment, says the *Colliery Guardian*, is that when shots are

fired in the mine the cloth pipes can be folded together and put out of the way in a manner which would be impracticable were the tubes made of metal or wood.

#### THE 'LIGHT' TREATMENT FOR SKIN DISEASES.

In our recent article on the Finsen Institute it was indicated that there would soon be one on the same system in London. It is announced that a department has been opened at the London Hospital for the treatment of lupus and some other diseases of the skin by Professor Finsen's method of phototherapy, or 'light treatment.' This work is being carried on in connection with the department of diseases of the skin, and is superintended by the physicians in charge thereof, and under the immediate care of the special dermatological clinical assistant. The introduction of this method of treatment at the London Hospital—the first in Great Britain to adopt it—is due to Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, who has taken the greatest interest in it since she first saw it carried out in Copenhagen. Her Royal Highness presented the necessary and expensive apparatus required, being most anxious that its benefits should be extended to the poor of London. Nurses have been specially trained for the work at Copenhagen.

#### EVENING SONG OF THE BRETON FISHERMAN.

A SINGING breeze in the yellow sail,  
Crisp white foam on the summer sea;  
Sunset shadows and moonlight pale  
On yonder haven, where I would be.  
The toils of the day are over and past,  
The fisherman comes to his rest at last!

The bells are ringing the vesper chime  
In buried cities beneath the sea;  
And the calm of the holy eventime  
Has wrought its peace on the world and me.  
Ave Maria! In mercy keep  
The resting land and the restless deep.

The lighthouse flashes the beacon high,  
A golden path on the dark'ning sea;  
A star shines out in the dusky sky,  
And faint lights glimmer along the quay.  
And I know what the Star of Home is worth  
When the heart of heaven beats close to earth.

E. E. OHLSON.

#### \* \* TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3rd. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



# Chamber's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### THE BISHOP AND THE CONSTABLE.

By JAMES WORKMAN.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

**I**N opposition to those who assume that modern life, as the majority of us know it, is invariably dull and undramatic, it may be confidently asserted that most people are acquainted with at least one instance in which circumstances of an apparently trivial nature have produced the most improbable and unexpected complications. The following narrative may be offered as a proof of this somewhat obvious statement.

One sunny afternoon in July, Mary Jones, waitress, was arranging her hair at a pier-glass in a comfortable sitting-room of the Red Lion Inn, Higgleston. A French window, facing the river, which flowed at the foot of a sloping lawn, stood wide open, and beside it, casting admiring glances at the waitress's trim figure, lurked the village constable, Jewson. Unconscious of the presence of a witness, Mary dexterously adjusted her crisp locks, smiling and nodding at herself in the glass as she did so; but when Jewson incautiously brushed his sleeve against the ivy that encircled the window she turned round with a start.

'Joe, what a fright you gave me!' she exclaimed. 'What are you doing there?'

'Watching you, Mary,' replied the amorous constable. 'I could have stood here watching you for ever, Mary.'

Mary tossed her head disdainfully, and professed to be industriously rearranging the ornaments on the mantelpiece.

'Ay, if there was money to be made by watching other people work you'd soon be a rich man, Joe,' she retorted. 'That's the kind of work you were always best at.'

The constable grinned amiably, but remained speechless, as he usually did when Mary was exercising her powers of repartee at his expense. He would have liked to pay her back in her own

coin, but he could never think of anything to say until it was too late.

'Well, I've got some work to do, if you haven't,' continued Mary; 'so you can stand there with your mouth open as long as you like, Joe.'

She moved briskly towards the door, but Jewson hurriedly interposed.

'Here, don't go, my dear,' he exclaimed, stepping into the room and producing a scrap of newspaper from his pocket-book. 'I've come on business this time. I've got a good thing on, Mary.'

'Ah, yes!' said Mary sceptically, 'you've always got good things on, Joe; but somehow or other they never come off.'

'Oh, just you wait a bit, my girl,' said Jewson; 'just you wait a bit.'

'Ay,' rejoined Mary, 'I think I'll have to wait a bit before I see you made an inspector, Joe.'

Jewson made a futile effort to evolve some epigrammatic reply; but, failing to do so, he handed her the scrap of paper.

'Read that,' said he. 'It's a hextract from the *Higgleston Herald*.'

The extract consisted of a letter from a well-known resident in the district, warning the public against a swindler who had succeeded in obtaining large sums of money by professing to collect subscriptions for a metropolitan charity. The writer, who happened to be one of his victims, described him as a young man of middle height, with dark hair and moustache, who wore gold spectacles, was attired in clerical costume, and represented himself to be a clergyman. Others, the correspondent continued, described him as being tall and fair; and, unless they were entirely mistaken, the swindler either had accomplices or assumed various disguises in order to throw the police off the scent.

Mary glanced through the extract without any great show of interest, and handed it back to Jewson.



'Well?' she asked indifferently.

'Well, don't you see that if I was to get hold of this party it might be the makin' of me?' answered Jewson eagerly. 'There'd be paragraphs in all the newspapers about me, and I should be spoken of as a hactive and intelligent officer; and who knows what it might lead to? Perhaps after all, Mary, you'll live to see the day when there's an inspector's wife known by the name of Mrs Jewson.'

Mary dexterously evaded the huge arm which playfully attempted to encircle her.

'Go along with you!' she exclaimed. 'I'm not Mrs Jewson yet, Mr Impudence, and perhaps I never shall be.'

'But when I've got that party safe in the lock-up, and you see me talked about in all the papers, you'll name the day, the happy day—won't you, Mary?'

Jewson's arm once more hovered fitfully in the vicinity of her waist; but Mary again eluded it.

'Ah! but you haven't got him yet,' she said, with a shake of the head; 'and it's my belief you never will, Joe.'

'Oh, won't I?' retorted Jewson. 'I tell you he's known to be somewhere about Higgleston. He's been seen and spoke to this very day; and it's as likely as not he'll come here. My idea is as there's a gang of 'em, and that each of 'em plays the parson in turn so as to escape hidentification; and so I'm going to run in every parson that can't give a satisfactory account of himself, until I get hold of the right one. You haven't got any parsons or other suspicious characters stopping at the inn—have you?'

'No.'

'Well, if you see any one answering to the description of the party described in that paper—I'll leave it on the table here—you send a boy after me as quick as his legs can carry him; and perhaps the time'll come, my good girl, when you'll be proud to be addressed as Mrs Jewson.'

At that moment Mary, who was glancing out of the window, observed two slim, daintily-attired figures, surmounted by red and white sunshades, moving gracefully towards the inn.

'Be off with you!' she exclaimed impatiently. 'Here are two young ladies coming.'

Jewson slipped hurriedly out of the window, and a few minutes later the two visitors were ushered into the room by Mary.

The first to enter was Miss Helen Ponsonby, daughter of the late Lieutenant-Colonel Ponsonby, and niece to that justly distinguished prelate, the Bishop of Hamchester. Helen was tall and fair, with a very winning face, gentle, refined, and sweet-tempered—a universal favourite. She enjoyed the reputation of being as good as she was pretty, and that—even critics of her own sex admitted—was saying a good deal. Her companion, Miss Kate Leslie, though equally attractive in her own way, was a striking contrast to

the Bishop's niece. She was slight and dark, vivacious and quick-witted, and simply bubbling over with energy.

'Can I bring you anything, miss?' asked Mary.

'Not at present, thank you,' rejoined Helen. 'We promised to meet a gentleman here. We shall wait until he arrives.'

'Very well, miss,' answered Mary, and promptly disappeared.

With the air of one who is thoroughly wearied out, Katie threw herself on the couch.

'Do you know, Helen,' she said, 'that I feel quite exhausted. I never tried so hard to be agreeable in my life.'

Helen laughed quietly to herself as she sat down by the open window and gazed out at the glimmering, sunlit river, on which amateur oarsmen were gaily disporting themselves. To Katie, who was hot and excited, she looked exasperatingly cool and placid.

'Well,' she replied, 'I think you ought to be satisfied with the impression you made.'

'But I'm not,' exclaimed Katie, starting up again. 'That's the worst of it. I'm very far from being satisfied. Helen, I have a painful impression that the Bishop saw through me as plainly as I see through that window. Whenever he looked down at me in that calm, self-possessed way of his, I felt just like an insect under a microscope.'

'I'm sure he thought you a very charming insect,' laughed Helen.

'Then, whenever his eyes twinkled,' continued Katie, 'I could almost hear him saying to himself, "This girl wants me to present the living of Little Southam to her *fiancé*, Frank Ambrose, and so she is trying to fascinate me—*me*, a dignitary of the Church—a Bishop!" Oh! it did make me feel so small, so absolutely microscopical. Ah! if Frank only knew what I was enduring for his sake.'

She wound up with a sigh that was echoed by Helen, who was still gazing pensively out of the window.

'Well, after all, you're more fortunate than I am, Katie,' said Helen. 'You know Arthur has never been introduced to the Bishop, and I haven't the least idea whether uncle will approve of him or not. Uncle believes that he can read character at a glance; and if Arthur happened to produce an unfavourable impression upon him he might refuse his consent to our engagement.'

Katie shrugged her shoulders impatiently.

'What does it matter whether he consents or not?' she exclaimed.

'But he's my guardian, Katie, and I shan't be of age for ever so long.'

'But Arthur isn't a penniless curate like Frank,' cried Katie. 'He has heaps of money. If I were in your shoes I wouldn't care a snap of the fingers for all the guardians in the world. I should elope.'

Helen laughed good-humouredly.

'You ridiculous girl!' she said; 'as if I should ever dream of doing such a thing.'

'Well, I should, in your place,' said Katie. 'But what would be the use of eloping with Frank? I've expensive tastes. I was born that way. We simply couldn't live on a hundred and fifty a year. It would be absurd of us to marry, unless Frank gets a living. Look here now: do you think I should ask the Bishop right out if he'll give Little Southam to Frank?'

Helen shook her head gravely.

'I think it would be rather risky, dear,' she rejoined. 'Uncle takes that kind of thing very seriously, you know; and I'm afraid he thinks that Frank is—well, just a trifle frivolous, you know.'

'Ah! people don't understand Frank,' answered Katie. 'He never pulls a long face, on principle; but I know that if he got a living he'd settle down into one of the most thorough-going, hard-working clergymen in England.'

'I know he would,' said Helen; 'and you'd be a model clergyman's wife, though you profess to be such a mercenary little worldling. Well, well, I hope things will come right for both of us in the end. I suppose we must just be as patient as we can.'

'Fiddlesticks!' exclaimed Katie, exasperated beyond endurance by Helen's meek air of resignation. 'There ought to be no need for us to be patient. The fact is that Arthur's a mulf. So is Frank, though not quite as big a one as Arthur. Oh, if I were only a man! If I were Frank I'd make the Bishop give me that living. If I were Arthur I'd marry you if you had twenty uncles, and every one of them a bishop.'

Helen's smiling face turned grave again.

'I couldn't marry without uncle's consent,' she said quietly.

'No, of course you couldn't,' exclaimed Katie. 'You aren't made that way. Oh! when I hear a girl talking like that—as if she had no backbone—as if she had no right to an opinion of her own—as if she had no more will than a jelly-fish—I could take her by the shoulders and shake her.'

'Don't, you little spitfire,' laughed Helen as Katie suited the action to the word. 'You'd better not let the Bishop hear you talking like that.'

'Oh, bother the Bishop!'

'Katie!'

'Well, well, don't look shocked. Let's go and meet the dear old man, and be so sweet that he can't possibly refuse us anything.'

They stepped out of the window and along the road, and presently beheld a tall, vigorous, elderly gentleman in gaiters approaching at a leisurely pace, with his hands clasped behind his back and his chin upon his breast. It was that eminent and scholarly divine the Bishop of Hamchester.

In the meantime, at an upper window, Mary was gazing dreamily out at the glimmering river flowing placidly on its way to the far-off sea; but though her eyes rested intently upon it, she was, for the time being, absolutely oblivious of its existence. She was thinking over her recent interview with Jewson, and wondering whether he would succeed in his efforts to distinguish himself. The professional advancement of the worthy constable meant quite as much to her as that of the Reverend Frank Ambrose to Miss Kate Leslie. She was just as impatient at his slow progress, and just as eager to assist him if the opportunity offered. Unfortunately his chances of success depended entirely upon his personal capacity, and that—however devoted she might be to him—Mary was by no means disposed to overrate. Moreover, past experiences had led her to regard him as being exasperatingly unlucky.

'If it was anybody but Joe,' she murmured to herself, 'I'd say he'd got a good thing on; but Joe's good things never do come off, and this one won't. If it wasn't Joe it would; but as it is Joe, it won't.'

The words had scarcely passed her lips when she started and flushed, and craned eagerly out of the window. A small boat was coming swiftly up the river, propelled by a young man in white flannels and a blazer. He was of medium height, and had, as Mary noticed when he occasionally turned his head, a black moustache. Reclining luxuriously in the stern, and toying idly with the tiller-ropes, was another young man, tall and fair, attired in full clerical costume, and wearing a pair of gold spectacles.

Perhaps every human being is at heart an amateur detective, and only too ready to clutch at the first opportunity of figuring as one. In addition to this common, if not universal predisposition, Mary's latent craving to appear in that fascinating character was naturally stimulated by her interest in Jewson's professional success. With flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes she watched the little craft glance swiftly athwart the silvery stream and come to rest beside the quay at the foot of the lawn. Then, when the young men tied the boat to an iron ring, and strolled side by side towards the inn, she slipped downstairs with a joyfully beating heart, and, finding a stable-boy amusing himself by swinging on a gate in the back-yard, hurriedly despatched him in search of Jewson. Stimulated by the promise of a shilling, the youth vanished with phenomenal celerity, and Mary could hear his boots clattering loudly on the cobble-stones as he darted away to the police station.

In the meantime she determined that she would keep a close watch on the new arrivals until Jewson appeared, for she was now practically convinced that they were the swindlers he was in search of.

## WITTY SAYINGS I HAVE HEARD.

By JUSTIN M'CARTHY.



IT has always been held to be very rash to attempt to reproduce the witty sayings one has heard, as so much of the wit depends on the manner of the person who says them and the circumstances under which they are uttered. In spite of this I venture to set down some of the sayings of some of the witty men and women I have known; and if my readers should not find every saying quite as witty as I thought it at the time I heard it, I hope they will put down the fault to the chronicler and not to the author of the witty saying.

Mr Gladstone was not usually regarded as a wit, and he certainly did not set up for one, yet I have heard him say, at one time or another, things which I consider to be witty. Many years ago, when residing in Liverpool, I was present one evening at a meeting at which Mr Gladstone appeared as the advocate of the candidature of his brother-in-law, Sir Stephen Glynne, who was at that time standing for the representation in Parliament of a neighbouring county. At the moment when Mr Gladstone had finished his speech a shabby-looking, unkempt, and ragged man thrust himself forward to the front of the meeting and insisted on asking Mr Gladstone a question. He wanted to know whether Mr Gladstone would not hold his brother-in-law bound to follow him in every course he proposed to take whenever he, Mr Gladstone, should become Prime-Minister. The object of the man's question was obviously to discredit Sir Stephen Glynne and to show him up as the mere nominee and instrument of his illustrious brother-in-law. There were some angry interruptions, and there were also many scornful cries of 'Don't answer him' from the audience. But Mr Gladstone, having first stilled the noise by a wave of his hand, and then fixed his eyes on the rude questioner, said in his blandest manner, 'I shall hold my brother-in-law bound to follow me when I am Prime-Minister so long as I adopt a course which tends to the welfare of the people; and I shall hold him bound to follow you, when you are Prime-Minister, so long as you adopt a course that tends to the same great result.' I need not say that the interrupter thereafter remained silent.

At a later time, one night during a debate in the House of Commons, a quite obscure and very self-conceited member made an attack on Mr Gladstone's Government, and in the course of his oration declared that he had a poor opinion of the British Parliament. When Mr Gladstone came to reply, in alluding to the remarks of the obscure member, he said, 'The honourable member has

told us that he has but a poor opinion of the British Parliament. Well, Mr Speaker, it is some comfort to believe that the opinion of the honourable member is not finally and altogether conclusive as to the historical position of the British Parliament.' I am afraid that even the friends of the honourable member joined in the laughter with which this part of Mr Gladstone's speech was received.

Yet one more story of Mr Gladstone. I was once in company with him when some conversation took place about a very furious attack made upon him in the House of Commons one night by a member on the opposite side of the House, or of the 'gangway,' to use the expression most familiar in Parliament. The odd thing about the affair was that the assailant had hitherto been known as one of the quietest, most retiring, and most soft-headed men in the House of Commons; and everybody present expressed wonder that such a man could ever come to make such a display of passion. Gladstone, who had not yet taken any part in the conversation on the incident, now quietly observed, 'I have often heard that no animal is so dangerous as a mad sheep.' I am sorry to say that the unfortunate member was known among his friends from that time forth and for evermore as 'the mad sheep.'

My late friend, Richard Power—or, as he was more commonly called in the House of Commons, 'Dick' Power—was one of the wittiest and most popular men of his time. He was one of our band of Irish Nationalist members; but he was liked as much by English, Scotch, and Welsh members as by his own countrymen, and that is saying a great deal. He rode splendidly to hounds—Parnell and he had the reputation of being the two boldest riders in Ireland; and although he was not fond of making speeches, he could make a capital speech whenever it became necessary to take part in a debate. When speaking one evening at a public dinner, he made allusion to Thackeray's famous saying about the brilliant repartees that one makes when driving home alone at night in one's hansom-cab. Then he went on to say, 'I can assure this assembly that not Pitt, nor Fox, nor Bright, nor Gladstone has ever made such eloquent speeches in the House of Commons as some which I have *not* made there!'

I was travelling once with Dick Power and some other Irish members on a night-journey on an Irish railway during the storm and stress of a general election. Suddenly the train came to a dead stand at a place where there was no station. Amazement and alarm filled the minds of some of us. 'What could have happened?' we asked ourselves mentally. 'Could the Tories have torn up



the rails? Could the Orangemen have barricaded the line?' It took a great deal to alarm Dick Power. He quietly rose from his seat and thrust his head out of the window, in the hope of finding some explanation. 'What are we stopping for?' he inquired of a railway official who happened to be passing just at the moment. 'It's nothing, sir,' was the reply; 'only we have had to detach the engine.' 'All right,' said Dick Power; 'only take care you don't go on without it!'

Dick Power once had a sharp contest for one of the Irish constituencies. The contest was the more unpleasant to him because his opponent, who was formerly a political colleague, had changed his principles and gone over to the other side. Dick fought the battle gallantly, according to his usual fashion, and he won the seat. On the night when the result of the election was made known, Dick was sitting with some friends in the principal hotel of the place. Suddenly in came the defeated candidate; and, casting an indignant glance at Dick, he exclaimed, 'All is lost but honour!' Dick cheerily said in reply, 'All right. I have got the seat, and you say you have got the honour; so we have both got what we most wanted.'

Many people in this country and in the United States have heard of Mr Mortimer Menpes, the distinguished etcher and impressionist painter, whose sketches of Japanese life and of Mexican life were the sensation of London for more than one season. Menpes was dining at my house one evening in company with my old friend Mr Thomas Crosbie, a leading Irish journalist, editor and proprietor of the *Cork Examiner*, and at that time President of the Institute of Journalists of Great Britain and Ireland. Menpes was giving us, in his droll and humorous way, a picture, half-comic, half-pathetic, of the effect of business worries on the artistic temperament, and he said, in pointing the moral of his remarks, 'It isn't a very pleasant thing to have a man come dunning one for money if one is an artist.' 'No, indeed,' said Tom Crosbie, with a sweet and sympathetic smile; 'and I don't know that it is a very pleasant thing even if one is not an artist.' The comment came home to us all, as showing that the artist does not stand divinely alone in his appreciation of 'life's little ironies.'

Whistler—'The Master,' as his followers delight to call him; 'Jimmy,' as most of his friends designate him—was once painting the portrait of a distinguished novelist, who was extremely clever but also extremely ill-favoured. When the portrait was finished the sitter did not seem satisfied with it. 'You don't seem to like it,' Whistler said. The sitter confessed that he did not, and said in self-justification, 'You must admit that it is a bad work of art.' 'Yes,' Whistler replied; 'but I think you must admit that you are a bad work of nature.'

Mr J. E. C. Bodley, the well-known author of the clever and exhaustive book on France lately

published, was distinguished in London society as a sayer of witty things. At a luncheon-party one day a lady was describing a visit she had paid to the house of a then famous æsthete, who was supposed to have a greater taste for house-decoration than for habits of frequent ablution. Among other things, she described the harmonious colouring of his bath-room. Bodley expressed incredulity as to the æsthete's use for the bath-room. The lady indignantly repudiated the insinuation, and said, 'I am sure he bathes a great deal.' 'In that case,' said Bodley quietly, 'he must be an even greater artist than I gave him credit for.'

This story reminds me of a very amusing thing said by my late friend, Sir John Pope-Hennessy. Hennessy began his public life in the House of Commons as a special protégé of Disraeli. He afterwards served Her Majesty with great distinction as the Governor in succession of several colonies, and was again a member of the House of Commons up to the time of his death. One day there was some talk about a friend of ours who had two objectionable peculiarities: he was not given to the use of soap and water, and he was always borrowing money. 'Yes, poor fellow,' said Hennessy, 'he sponges upon everybody except himself.'

On another occasion we were talking about a well-known novelist, who wrote in a peculiarly affected and artificial style full of what Thackeray calls, when writing of Becky Sharp, 'gallicised graces and daring affectations.' Some one told us that he had heard this author say that he had been so badly treated by the critics on the London press that he was determined he would never write any more novels in English. 'Indeed!' said Hennessy. 'I did not know that he had ever written any novels in English.'

My friend Thomas Sexton, who was for many years, as every one knows, a member of the House of Commons, and has only lately withdrawn from public life, had the reputation of being not only one of the greatest orators in the House, but also one of the wittiest men in private conversation. One day, while I was still leader of the Irish National Party, I was particularly anxious to get some information on a pressing subject before the House from Mr Vesey Knox, who was then, and until lately, member for the Ulster city of Derry. I rushed from my seat in the debating chamber into the central lobby, where members often lounge and talk, and looked around for my friend. There I saw Sexton, and I went eagerly up to him and asked, 'Where can I find Knox?' 'There he is at the door,' replied Sexton. 'Knox naturally would be at the door.'

On another occasion some of us were talking about touring in Ireland, and were each of us giving our opinion as to what was the most charming view to be seen during an Irish tour. One of the company—a somewhat nervous man,

who had lately been visiting Ireland during all the excitement and turmoil of a general election—remained silent and offered no opinion. 'What do you think?' some one asked of him. 'Oh,' said Sexton, interposing, 'I am afraid our friend thinks that the most charming view in an Irish tour is the view of Euston Station, London, on the return journey.'

Another great friend of mine, T. P. O'Connor, is known to everybody in England and in America as a brilliant parliamentary and platform orator, and is known also to his friends in both countries as a most amusing talker, with a wonderful power of expressive phrase-making. Some of us were talking once about a friend of ours, a member of the House of Commons. A lady who was one of the company said it was a pity for the sake of his personal appearance that he had such very large ears. 'Yes,' said T. P.; 'and the worst of it is that, while they are too large for ears, they are too small for wings.'

At another time we were talking of an absent friend who fancied that he had a great gift for music, and likewise a faculty for regenerating the world. Some one asked, 'Is he always playing the fiddle?' 'Well,' replied T. P., 'I do not know that he is always playing the fiddle; but he certainly is always playing the fiddle or the fool.'

Lady Dorothy Nevill, one of the wittiest women in London society, is well known to most Americans who visit London during the season. Some time ago there was a rich and ambitious man in society who went in for entertaining largely, and especially for making his parties interesting and representative. A marked falling-off began to take place, after a while, in the quality of his guests. Lady Dorothy, commenting on this deterioration, said, 'Once we used to meet Browning and Whistler and Henry James, and so on, there; but now we only meet—so on.'

I was talking with Lady Dorothy one day about a lady to whom I was giving high praise, and Lady Dorothy seemed inclined to disparage her. 'She is very clever,' I said. Lady Dorothy shook her head scornfully. 'But,' I pleaded, 'she is so very well read.' 'Come, come,' replied Lady Dorothy, with a smile, 'she is evidently much cleverer than I thought, since she has been able to make you believe that she ever read anything.'

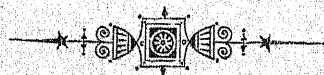
Another lady of great distinction in London society, not long since dead, was giving to some friends her recollections of celebrated men she had met. Among the rest she spoke of Thackeray. She said that Thackeray always embarrassed her in conversation by his evident desire to say sharp and clever things, even on the most commonplace

subjects. 'I was afraid,' she observed, 'to say in his presence that the sun was very bright to-day, not knowing whether he might not reply, "Yes; but when we remember on how many of the unjust it shone we may find its brightness dimmed by the thought that it shone no brighter for those of us who are still trying to be just."'

My friend, Frank H. Hill—who was for a long time the editor of the *Daily News*, and is the author of a very successful *Life of George Canning* and of a volume called *Political Portraits* which made a distinct sensation in literature—is well known for his sharp and subtle criticisms. Among our acquaintances there was a young journalist who had made a mark by his clever literary essays, but who was also noted, among his friends, for his curious lack of scholarly culture. Hill once said to me, 'Do you know that our friend,' whom he named, 'is a great Greek scholar?' I replied that I had never heard anything of the kind attributed to him, nor from my long knowledge of him had I the least suspicion that his culture took any such form. 'Well, it is certain,' said Hill, 'that he was for many years at one of the universities; it is also certain that no one has ever been through that university without learning something; and as it is absolutely certain that he knows nothing else, it is clear that he must have devoted his time there to the study of Greek.'

One night a group of members were talking in the smoking-room of the House of Commons about a measure which it was proposed to recommend to the consideration of the Government, and on which we were all understood to be in complete agreement. Suddenly a member, who had up to this time offered no objection, and had, indeed, sat in absolute silence—though he was well known for an extraordinary aptitude in spinning out talk on the most trivial subject—broke in with the words, 'I suppose there is something to be said on the other side.' 'I dare say there is,' Thomas Sexton observed; 'and if we had a couple of months to spare you are just the very man to say it; but then, you see, the matter is coming on the day after to-morrow, and there really is no time.' So the little group broke up.

I am afraid I cannot think of any more clever sayings just at present. I can only add, in vindication of the effort I have made, thus far, to convey to my readers some idea of the humour which, at each time, made an impression on me, that the sayings were actually spoken, and by the persons to whom I have ascribed them, and are not to be found in any collection of the sayings attributed to Doctor Johnson, Douglas Jerrold, or Sydney Smith.



## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

By JOHN OXENHAM.

CHAPTER XL.—COUSIN : COUSINE.



AFTER breakfast, which was less cheerful than usual, Vaurel shouldered my big portmanteau, and took it and me by a circuitous route to the station, just in time to catch the midday train to Rennes. There I sent off to mademoiselle a telegram announcing my arrival that evening. Then I went up to my hotel to get some things I wanted, and which I had not hitherto needed at Cour-des-Comptes. I afterwards proceeded to a barber's and had my moustache and beard shaved off; and if I had not known my own eyes I should not have known myself when I looked in the glass.

I came down by the evening train, and Louis Vard put my portmanteau into the waiting carriage without recognising me; and I was bumped away in the cumbrous old rattle-trap in the highest of spirits to the Château.

The driver signalled our arrival by a volley of pistol-cracks from his huge whip, and mademoiselle herself came out to the big hall to welcome me. There was a sparkle in her eye which it did my heart good to see; but she stopped short at sight of my altered face and stood doubtfully.

'Why, Cousin Denise,' I said in English, holding out both hands to her, 'it is so long since we met that I believe you hardly know me.'

'Is it really you, Cousin Hugh?' she said, her face colouring beautifully. 'You are so changed that at first I hardly knew you.'

'I hope I do not put you to any inconvenience by taking you unawares in this way, cousin?'

'I am delighted to see you,' she said. 'How did you know I was here?'

'Well, you see, I heard—certain things, and ran over to Paris, and there I found you had come down here; so I came on to see if I could be of any service to you.'

'That was very good of you. Now, you must be starving. We dine in half-an-hour.—Hortense, show Monsieur Lamont to his room.—*A bientôt, mon cousin!*'

Within the half-hour I was back in the great hall, wondering in which direction the *salon* lay. Hortense came tripping to my assistance from a dark passage and showed me to the door, opening it as she knocked.

'Monsieur!' she announced, and I found myself in the presence of the enemy. Mademoiselle came forward at once and formally introduced me:

'Madame la Duchesse de St Ouen—Monsieur Lamont!'

The face of a statue in the *coif* of a nun—marble-

white, thin-lipped, austere; eyes discreetly veiled. Madame the Duchess did not favour me with even half a glance, nor did I ever at any time see her looking at anybody or anything; but I have an idea that all the same, in some occult way, she kept a pretty keen eye on everything that went on.

'M. l'Abbé Dieufoy'—mademoiselle's fellow-traveller in the train, but not nearly so grim-faced and ascetic-looking as when last I saw him. His manner was suave and polished; his eyes were as keen as a hawk's, and he made no pretence of veiling them.

'M. le Colonel Lepard'—big, burly, bull-necked, bullyish—approaching the brutal; his strong red face adorned with a sword-cut over the temple, and a black moustache and imperial—a soldier to the finger-tips; which last, by the way, I could not help noticing during dinner, would have been none the worse for a little attention.

I bowed solemnly to these good people, and take credit to myself for keeping so grave a face when my heart was full of laughter.

The priest made some remark to me in French, and I turned on mademoiselle a face of deprecation and anxious inquiry.

'Will you please apologise to the gentleman for my lack of knowledge of French, cousin?' I said; and, with one quick, amused glance at me, she did so in the demurest fashion possible.

Here Hortense announced to mademoiselle that dinner was served, and we passed into the dining-room, mademoiselle seating me at her right hand, the priest being on her left.

I am bound to say I enjoyed myself exceedingly, inasmuch as I knew that my presence there must be extremely distasteful to the other three, and that I was at the same time contributing somewhat to the enjoyment, or at all events to the lightening of the depression, of mademoiselle.

As I showed a most lamentable ignorance of the beautiful language, I was free to rattle away to my heart's content to my fair neighbour about Warwickshire, where I had never been, and about numerous mutual acquaintances whom we had neither of us ever met. Meanwhile I was noting and absorbing everything I could concerning my fellow-guests, and forming my own opinions about them.

Madame Mère ate in silence and as though the very opening of her mouth to admit food were a concession to the world and a falling from grace. She had pudgy, ill-shaped hands, and showed her consciousness of them, and thereby a certain lack of absolute detachment from things earthly, by



keeping them, when not in use, folded meekly inside her ample sleeves. She sat, for the most part, a picture of meek resignation and abnegation—qualities which, I was later on to learn, were not the most conspicuous in her character. Her most devoted adherent never could have claimed for Madame Mère that she was an absolutely exhilarating companion at a feast.

M. l'Abbé had one prominent vice: he took snuff. He took it freely and constantly, but with an elegance of manner which came near to elevating it to a virtue. Whenever M. l'Abbé indulged, Madame Mère's marble face twinged as with a sudden spasm of toothache, and then her lips moved rapidly, though almost invisibly, in silent prayer. It was really very funny. It seemed to me that at each snuffle her mind let slip an imprecation—something quite mild of course, such as 'Oh dear!' or 'Disgusting!'—and then, recognising her lack of charity, she hastened to pacify her conscience with a prayer.

Colonel Lepard made me think of a hungry dog held back from its bone. He spoke little and drank freely of the Burgundy, and smacked his lips over it.

Many times during dinner, when I turned to speak to mademoiselle, her eyes showed me that, brief as our previous acquaintance had been, she was still not quite accustomed to my altered looks.

When the ladies withdrew, Colonel Lepard accepted a cigar from my case with a somewhat ill grace, and smoked it with a relish which he tried hard to conceal. Apparently he knew no English. But M. Dieufoy spoke the barbarous language to a small extent, and he and I had quite an amusing time of it. Indeed, much as he, no doubt, regretted my appearance on the scene, from matters of policy, it seemed to me that from a social point of view he looked upon me as an improvement on the Colonel, and was inclined to cultivate my acquaintance. Now and again, when those keen eyes of his rested questioningly upon me, as the long white finger and thumb raised the pungent morsel to his nose, I had an uncomfortable moment of doubt as to whether he had not at last recognised me as not quite the utter stranger I claimed to be. But the searching look passed, and I sat in comfort again.

So here was I, in this most extraordinary fashion, installed as chief guest in the castle of my desire, enjoying myself greatly, it is true, but never for one moment losing sight of the reason for my being there, and desirous only of furthering the wishes of the fair châtelaine. For she held my heart in sway as completely as she ruled in this great house of hers.

M. l'Abbé waited with the utmost politeness till the Colonel had smoked his cigar to the last half-inch, and had regretfully laid that down. Then he rose, saying, 'Mademoiselle no doubt awaits

us,' and led the way into another room on the other side of the great hall.

It was a large room, with four long windows opening on to the terrace; and by reason of its size it gave one the impression of being somewhat sparsely furnished—the spindle-legged chairs and tables and uninviting couches looking stiff and lonely on the great expanse of highly polished floor.

The evening was not cold; but, for the sake of its companionableness probably, mademoiselle had had a bright fire of split logs built on the hearth, and she was sitting in front of it with a book. Madame Mère had retired, for purposes of meditation no doubt; and our company felt a trifle warmer and less austere for her absence.

'Ah, mademoiselle, you are alone?' said M. Dieufoy.

'In the best of good company, M. l'Abbé,' she smiled. 'Madame Mère has gone to bed.'

'She is an early riser, I believe,' he said, with an answering smile, from which I gathered that madame's exceeding piety palled somewhat even upon him.

'If madame were a soldier, now,' growled Lepard—and the idea was so incongruous, and needed so vigorous a stretch of the imagination to compass it, that M. Dieufoy smiled again—'she would take advantage of being beyond the sound of the réveillé, and would lie as long as she could of a morning.'

'Madame carries her réveillé within her, M. le Colonel,' said the Abbé, 'and she never gets beyond reach of its call.'

'Certainly she does not seem to me absolutely to enjoy life,' said the Colonel, with a shrug.

'In her own way,' said the Abbé, 'though the signs of it may not be very apparent. But we all have our own ideas of enjoyment. You, my dear Colonel, have just enjoyed a very good cigar. I myself take pleasure in this pinch of snuff. Madame takes offence at both. Mademoiselle, on the contrary, graciously shows no dislike to either.'

'I like the smell of a good cigar,' said mademoiselle; 'but I don't think I should like snuff. I have never tried it.'

'Pardon! Permit me, mademoiselle,' said M. l'Abbé, tendering his box with a bow of extreme elegance.

The Colonel laughed as mademoiselle's pretty nose wrinkled up uncompromisingly.

'If I may be permitted to say so,' he cried, 'I should like to see madame try one of monsieur's cigars. We should be deprived of her company for a week.'

A curious piece of furniture, from whose highly polished sides the firelight flickered in rosy gleams, excited my curiosity. It looked like a big, flat, polished box on four high, thin legs; but from the pedals below I surmised that it might

be a piano, though I had never seen one like it before.

Denise saw me looking at it.

'Is it a piano?' I asked. 'Would you not play us something?'

'It's a piano of a kind,' she said, with a smile; 'but I doubt if it is usable—unless, indeed, Hortense is in the habit of practising on it when we are not here, which is more than likely. In fact, I should be somewhat surprised if she did not.'

She went forward and opened the little oblong box-front of it.

'I have not played a note,' she said, musingly, 'since'—and her slim fingers dropped doubtfully on to the flat, faded keys. They were yellow with age, and the sounds they produced were quite in keeping with their looks—thin and wiry and ancient; but the instrument was in fairly good tune, from which we imagined that Miss Hortense had probably made some progress in her musical studies.

As chord followed chord I slipped a chair into position; she sank on to it, and by degrees the notes shaped themselves into a sweet soft, tune—somewhat melancholy, indeed, as was her mood; but to me, who had but little knowledge of music, the sweetest I had ever heard.

Colonel Lepard and M. Dieufoy did not, I imagine, altogether approve of this diversion of mine. They both undoubtedly appreciated the fact that the nearer mademoiselle drew to me the farther must she be withdrawn from any influence they could exercise over her; and I have no doubt they both devoutly—or probably in the case of the Colonel anything but devoutly—wished me farther. They sat silent for a time listening to the music, and then Colonel Lepard growled disapprovingly:

'You will disturb madame at her devotions, mademoiselle.'

The Abbé, on the other hand, with a finer sense of diplomacy, testified his appreciation by clapping his palms lightly together, and saying softly, 'Bravo! bravo! You have done us good already, M. Lamont.'

All the same, I had the feeling that he also would have been much better satisfied if I had never come to the Château.

Mademoiselle's eyes were fixed musingly on the yellow keys, and her white hands continued gliding over them almost unconsciously, as it seemed to me, though sweetest music followed their every touch; and to two of us, at all events, the sound of it was at once soothing and exhilarating. I believe mademoiselle herself enjoyed it, once she had started, almost as much as I did. Her face, when at last she looked up, was brighter and more hopeful.

'That has done me good,' she said; 'but I have tired you all out. You should have stopped me sooner.'

'On the contrary, I, for one, should like you to go on all night,' I said.

'We must leave some for another time,' she replied; then closing the piano and picking up her book, she bade us all good-night.

My position among the contending factions in the house was very similar to that of the small boy who persists in obtruding his unwelcome presence in the parlour where his sister and his future brother-in-law desire only to be left alone. I disconcerted them all, and upset their plans, whatever they were, and all in the most innocently unconscious way; and from my extreme ignorance of their language I was impervious to all hints and innuendos. As an accepted member of the family, they were all fully aware that mademoiselle's best interests must be paramount with me, which was not absolutely the case with themselves. Before I arrived there were two factions in the house; now there were three, for the manner of the others showed plainly that they quite understood that mademoiselle would make me acquainted with all that was going on, and would claim my assistance.

Monsieur Dieufoy was always politeness personified, with an inclination even towards friendliness.

Colonel Lepard's black humour seemed to darken with every hour of my stay.

Madame Mère, frosty saint, bore with me in silent resignation, and never showed the slightest desire to break the ice either by word or look.

And mademoiselle! Perhaps it was that mademoiselle felt constrained as hostess to mitigate by every means in her power the unsympathetic atmosphere in which I found myself, and so deliberately overstepped the bounds and conventions in which she had doubtless been brought up. Perhaps she found a new and hitherto untasted delight in doing so. Perhaps she knew already that my feeling for her was neither cousinly nor that of simple friendship. But, whatever it was, she was utterly and absolutely charming, and my heart went out to her more and more with every hour I spent in her company.

For two delightful hours we paced the terrace together on the morning after my arrival, and spoke of many things and learned much of one another. Mademoiselle had given me her confidence, and it was her nature to trust completely where she trusted at all.

Colonel Lepard gloomed like a thunder-cloud.

M. Dieufoy snuffed voluminously and regarded us much as a schoolmaster might unobserved watch his pupils plotting mischief.

Madame the Duchess paid us not the slightest attention; but doubtless, as I have said, she kept a sharp eye on all our delinquencies.

Altogether it was an extremely enjoyable state of affairs, and braced one like a tonic or a stiff sea-breeze. Indeed, this strange and complete isola-

tion from the world and the close casting together within such narrow bounds induced a friendliness and comradeship between mademoiselle and myself akin to that of shipboard life; and the hours taught us to know one another better than days and weeks of ordinary meetings could have done. No doubt we were both more or less high-strung by the peculiar circumstances of the case, and thereby dropped almost unconsciously the conventional veils and masks which at other times and under ordinary circumstances we must have worn; but, however it came about, it is certain that by the middle of that second day I felt as though I had known mademoiselle for half a lifetime, and the greatest desire of my heart was to know her still better for the other half.

A more delightful cousin it would not be possible to imagine; but at intervals she would suddenly remember that our relationship was only two days old, and purely fictional at that. Then for a brief space a shy reserve would fall upon her, which, however, only served to heighten the piquant charm of her manner as some new idea struck her, and she forgot to be reserved, and poured out her thoughts as frankly and freely as if our supposed common ancestor had really once existed.

At dinner I inquired as to fishing and shooting in the neighbourhood, and mademoiselle offered to send for Prudent Vaurel next day to give me information on these subjects.

That first day was passed by the two other parties in a state of surprised but well-dissembled protest, while mademoiselle and I paced the terrace in cousinly converse and rounded off the angles and corners of our new-formed acquaintance; but on the following morning, when we essayed to continue this most enjoyable polishing process, Colonel Lepard's feelings got the better of him, and drove him to smoke his cigar on the terrace at the same time. That did not interfere with our enjoyment, however. Indeed, I am afraid I must confess to a certain amount of amusement, in which I think mademoiselle quietly shared, at the irritation and annoyance expressed on the gallant warrior's clouded face, which was puckered up in disgust into something very like a scowl at this unlooked-for interference with his plans.

The Church party made no sign; their diplomacy was of different quality and finer temper than the Colonel's, and in their generation they were wise, inasmuch as they excited no presently active hostility in our minds against them.

In the afternoon Vaurel came up to the house with Boulot at his heels.

Boulot made for me at once and testified his delight at our meeting once more with snorts and grimaces and stolid uprearings of himself against me, so that mademoiselle felt constrained to say, 'Why, you might be old friends. I do believe he knows you're an Englishman.'

'I shouldn't be a bit surprised,' I said gravely. "'Fee-fi-fo-fum!' you know; he 'smells the blood of an Englishman.'"

The Colonel was on the terrace, and Boulot, when he had finished with me, took an emphatic saunter in his direction, just to see what manner of man he was. But the Colonel did not, for some reason or other, entirely satisfy him. The great dog rumbled round the military legs like a miniature thunderstorm, drew his breath in so hard that his big white fangs showed, and blew it out again so vehemently that it sounded like a disgusted sneeze, and then came heavily back to us; while the Colonel called him a sacred devil and walked hastily away in the other direction.

To Vaurel's intense amusement, mademoiselle demurely introduced me as her cousin, acted as interpreter between us on the questions of fishing and shooting, and finally commended me to his care to be put into the way of obtaining such sport as might be expected to satisfy the cravings of my British nature; and so, in the most natural way possible, Vaurel and I came into touch again.

We set out at once to try one of the pools down the river; and when we had got well out of hearing of the house Vaurel let out his pent-up laughter and roared with delight.

'*Ma foi*, monsieur!' he said, 'but it is magnificent. There you are in the midst of them, upsetting all their plans, and making them all as mad as bears, I'll be bound. And you don't understand French! And, thousand thunders! do you know, monsieur, at first I did not know you. It is magnificent!'

'But so far, my friend, I have not advanced matters at all by being there.'

'Time enough! That will come all right, monsieur. Meanwhile, for myself, I do not like this Monsieur le Colonel Lepard.'

'Nor does Boulot apparently.'

'The little Boulot is not often at fault. If Boulot dislikes a man I do not like him either. Meanwhile, also, monsieur, I can see that mademoiselle is the happier for your being there.'

'The only trouble is that I am making no progress in the matter of Monsieur Gaston.'

'Any day you may tumble across something, monsieur; and meanwhile it is good for mademoiselle to have you there.'

'No trace has been found of Monsieur Roussel, I suppose?'

'Not a scrap of him. He'll come to the top in time; but how he escaped all our poles I cannot make out.'

'Maybe he climbed out and got away.'

'Not if Boulot once got his teeth in, as you say he did, monsieur. Boulot never lets go; and besides, where is he? No; Monsieur Roussel is down there,' he said, pointing down into the



water, 'and some time or other he'll come up, and may I not be there to see. He will not be nice to look upon.'

However, we saw nothing of him, and we had

a fair afternoon's fishing; but I confess the thought of eating the fish which might possibly have fed upon M. Roussel did not commend itself to me.

## MODERN PROBLEMS IN ANCIENT CHINA.

By Rev. T. G. SELBY, Author of *The Chinaman in his own Stories*.



CHINA is a land in which representative bits of the old world are preserved for our study as in a museum; but its primitive traditions make no mention of the chronic strife sometimes postulated

as the condition out of which civilisations emerge. Races of men differ as much in temper as breeds of dogs, or as the fighting and working order of ants; and to explain the rise of these variations is not more difficult in the one case than in the other. If we judge prehistoric man by the tribal fragments left in every continent of the world, the inference must be obvious that some branches of the family are milder in disposition than others; and to the more pacific offshoots of the original stock the ancient Chinese belonged. The classical books, which embalm very early traditions, are consistently on the side of peace and government by wise persuasion.

This feature in the genius of the Confucian records provoked the dislike of more than one military conqueror, and all but ended in the suppression of literature and the removal of China's greatest name from her roll of fame. 'Dances with shields and axes,' it was said, 'do not set forth the best side of music.' No foreign wars were to be undertaken in the first months of spring, although any necessary measures of self-defence might be undertaken. Campaigns of aggression at such times were sure to be followed by calamities from heaven. The return of the seed-time brought with it a temporary amnesty for the enemies of the Chinese feudal states. Military officers were forbidden to keep in their private houses 'their uniform and weapons of war;' the restriction, of course, indicating that hostilities could only be entered upon at the discretion of the ruling authorities. When civil strife arose ministers of state were not allowed to wear full-dress, but went into what we may venture to call half-mourning. An old ode, quoted in *The Book of Rites*, says, 'Before spear and shield are used one ought to examine himself.' As a preliminary to hostilities the ancestral shrines were worshipped, the offerings being afterwards taken to the field of battle—signs perhaps of the approval of the protecting spirits of the house, and incitements to heroism and valour in a cause submitted to this sacred tribunal.

Centuries before the Christian era we find an attempt to anticipate the Czar's rescript by re-

ducing the armaments of the feudal states. It was enacted that 'no state should have more than a thousand chariots; no city more than a hundred embrasures; no family, however rich, more than a hundred chariots.' These regulations were intended for the protection of the people; and yet some of the lords of the state rebelled against them.

China, which is the hotbed of civic and domestic ritual, and yet as set against war as George Fox or Count Tolstoi, belies the axiom of one of our philosophers, who has said that ceremonial institutions thrive in a military soil and tend to disappear with the growth of industrialism. For some reason or other, the Far East presents an enormous exception to this rule. Many considerations must have led the leaders of Chinese thought to take up this attitude of protest against war. Its wastefulness of life and money always appealed strongly to that instinct which every Chinaman has for the broad principles of political economy. The special honour accorded to age has never failed to act as an immense incentive to peace. Whilst either parent survived and needed filial affection and service, the son was not allowed to risk his life in a military campaign. The humanity of the Chinese character, combined perhaps with a touch of business shrewdness, creeps out in the regulation that 'no gray-headed captive should be taken in war.' One of the motives which led to the rigid, undeviating practice of court and temple ceremonies, differentiated to correspond with the rank of the celebrant, was to accentuate the line of the succession, and so to make dynastic wars impossible. The death of the emperor was described by a phrase in which there was the thunder of a falling mountain; of a great officer it was said that 'he no longer needed his emoluments,' and of a private citizen simply that he had died. If the member of a royal house had been guilty of a capital crime he was not executed in the market-place like a private citizen, but handed over to the forester to be put to death. His family representative mourned for him under an assumed name in somebody else's temple. These prescriptions, upon which an inordinate emphasis was laid, as we judge things, were intended as an antidote to the strife inevitable from a disputed succession.

Ancient China was made such a paradise for the ruling patriarchs that they at least had no interest in change and revolution. It was

etiquette, when the advice of old men was sought, to carry staff and stool whereon they might lean during the interview. The emperor went in person to consult a graybeard over ninety, whose counsels might be of service, and never required his attendance at court. The aged were allowed to take their staffs into the throne-room of the palace, and might retire before the emperor had formally dismissed the ministers-in-waiting. Lest a principle of unseemly inequality should be interposed between the generations, it was enacted that a man could not fill an office of the same grade as that held by his father. A profession of one's own incompetence must always preface the reply to a question asked by a senior.

In the dawn of history the Chinese tried to settle the question of old-age pensions. Men over fifty years of age were feasted at frequent and stated times in the public schools and colleges. Upon attaining the age of sixty they were allowed to remain seated at these village functions. Before a man of sixty years three dishes were placed; before a man of seventy, four; a man of eighty was in the five-course degree of municipal guestship; one of ninety was a six-course man, and it was further added that food and drink were never to be out of his chamber. This continuous feasting was paid for out of a corporate fund. Honourable

burial was provided in ways that took time by the forelock, without the dismal indignity of a funeral club. For one of sixty, the coffin and grave-clothes must be prepared, and ought to be overhauled once a year; for one of seventy, it was a duty to inspect the coffin at the four seasons; for one of eighty, once a month; for one of ninety, once a day—details rather indelicate and unfeeling from our standpoint, but not without their comfort to the Chinaman.

Such regulations made for peace, inasmuch as they gave a status of exceptional privilege to the aged; and a privileged class can generally be counted on to cast its vote against needless war, at least if the war is to trouble its own borders. For more than three thousand years the opinion of the patriarchs has been the opinion of an undivided China. In that old-world empire Rehoboam and his young men have little or no chance. This honour accorded to fullness of years is the foundation of the power the old exercise at the present time; and this power, whilst making China conservative and phenomenally hard to move, may give some degree of stability to that mammoth empire in the changes through which it is destined soon to pass. In East and West alike such changes seem to be the inevitable law of history.

## GENERAL GREEN AND ADMIRAL BROWN.

**S**IR, said General Green, 'you forget yourself, in my opinion.'

Admiral Brown bowed. 'I am obliged to you for your opinion,' he said, with a merry twinkle in his eyes. 'I do endeavour, to the best of my poor ability, to be unselfish. Now, in your branch of the services'—

'I wish you good-day, sir,' exclaimed the General, with fresh flame about the eyes, as he snatched up the hat he believed to be his.

'The same to you, and a healthful constitutional into the bargain,' said the Admiral in his most urbane manner.

'It will be none the less healthful, as you call it, and none the less pleasurable either, that I take it alone, sir.'

'I agree with you. When one has one's rag out, as the saying is'—

General Green stamped hard on the Turkey carpet, and immediately afterwards let loose an expressive monosyllable.

'Quite so. When one has the gout one should be careful. Now, if you will do me the honour to take my advice'—

Admiral Brown's smile was like gunpowder on the fire of the General's wrath. 'Confound it, sir!' he cried. A waiter rushed into the smoke-room, which these two had to themselves.

'Beg pardon, gentlemen; did you call?' he asked, with a look of surprise. The attitude of the two old friends was, for once, not at all friendly.

'Bring some ice,' said the Admiral.

'Certainly, sir.'

The General limped to the door, purple as to his cheeks. Half-way he turned and shook his right forefinger at Admiral Brown. 'If your son,' he said, 'presumes to accost my daughter in public again I'll horsewhip him, sir—horsewhip him on the Parade or off it, and tell him what I think of him.'

'Gad!' said the Admiral, as if he had heard a very good joke, 'what a capital show you'd make, the two of you, at that game! 'Pon my word, I'll arrange to be by with my kodak. I suppose you know Eric is one of the champion lightweight boxers?'

General Green put his hand to his forehead.

'Come, old chap,' murmured the Admiral, moving on his part towards the door, 'let's be sensible. At our time of life'—

Down dropped the General's hand. He was an excellently preserved old soldier, barring his gout, which was intermittent. He dyed his hair, wore a corset, drank brandies and sodas, and rode a bicycle.

'I—I'll give him a week to apologise,' he said

tensely; 'and if in that time I get no apology I'll give him his lesson.'

'I'll tell him what you say. Anything more to give him?'

'No, sir,' roared General Green. 'Our—our friendship's at an end—blasted by that iniquitous young puppy. And I'm glad of it, sir—glad from my heart.'

'Wish I could say the same, old chap.'

The General seemed to relent, but only for a moment. 'There, sir,' he said, 'I've given you my last words. Good-day.' He turned to the door and smote the carpet with his stick.

Admiral Brown's mouth twitched mirthfully. 'Well,' he said calmly, 'you've given me a good deal in the course of the last fifteen minutes. Suppose now you give me my hat.'

The General started as if he had been pricked, and glanced at the hat in his hand.

Just then the waiter appeared with the ice.

'Take that hat to the gentleman yonder,' said the General.

The waiter seemed more perplexed than before. He said, 'Certainly, General,' yet stared.

The Admiral took his hat, smiled with the utmost sweetness, considering what a bronzed and wrinkled old fellow he was, and observed, 'The ice is not for me. General Green is rather warm. Take it to him.'

But the General hurried from the room, with growls that would have done credit to a small menagerie.

'All right, John,' then said Admiral Brown; 'I'll have it, and some whisky and a cigar.' He slung himself into the easy-chair nearest the window and became grave. He grew more grave as he watched his old friend totter down the club steps and across the road to the Victoria Gardens, shaking his head as if he were somewhat palsied.

'Poor old Green!' he said, with real tenderness. 'He's certainly not the man he was a year ago.' He was still musing, not altogether gaily—for he too was in the sixties—when the door opened and a handsome young fellow entered.

'Thought I'd find you here,' he began; but he broke off with a 'Hullo! what's the matter?'

Admiral Brown had jumped to his feet, and there was neither sweetness nor light in his eyes now. He faced his son with squared chest and clenched hands.

'Now then, sir,' he cried, 'I've a tough bone to pick with you. What the dickens do you mean by kissing Helena Green in a public place? Do you know what you've done, sir? You've—'

But Eric Brown's face arrested the further flow of his father's rhetoric. It was grinning in the coolest imaginable manner. Not a particle of shame on it either. 'Why, hang it all, dad!' he said blandly, 'she asked me to.'

'Asked you to?'

'Point-blank. You know what a jolly girl she is, and I confess I'm awfully—'

'I know nothing about her except what I see of her. But you must be out of your mind.'

'I thought *she* was—at first,' said Eric, still smiling.

'Tell me the circumstances. Was she drunk, and were you too?'

'Neither of us, I'll swear. Helena drunk! My hat, dad! you're pretty rude.'

'The circumstances, sir?' cried the Admiral, as if he were again on the *Audacity*, yelling to a subordinate in a storm.

'The circumstances? Oh, we were just together by chance, you know, on one of the benches at the Pump-room end of the gardens, and she was saying how she loathed that beast Sir Titus'—

'The man she's going to marry! A nice little baggage, hang me!'

'Well, yes, sir, if you put it that way. He showed up, white waistcoat, strut, eyeglass, red nose, and all the ugly rest of him. He was quite a hundred paces off, you know. We'd been talking commonplace till then; but she changed her manner all at once. "I want you to do me a favour," she said suddenly. "I'll do it," said I, as any fellow would. Then she went awfully red and whispered, "Kiss me—just once—on the cheek." There wasn't a soul in sight except that brute. It knocked me silly. "Will you or will you not?" she went on. I'd no idea she could be so fierce. "It is a matter of life or death." Well, I couldn't stand that, of course, and so—I—did it.'

Admiral Brown rubbed his nose-tip. '*She* asked you?' he murmured, as if bewildered. 'I thought—that is— You're not yarning, my boy?'

'My word! no. Only, you know, this is between ourselves, dad.'

'Between ourselves? Why, certainly. Bless my soul!' He seized his hat. 'I—I'm going to the Pump-room. Don't come with me. Bless *my* soul!'

He blessed his soul yet again when he was on the club steps.

Admiral Brown came upon General Green in the neighbourhood of that little temple arrangement near the Pump-room. There was a lady's statue under a stone canopy in the temple. The lady's name was Hygeia. The General was still exceedingly irate, and there were latent feelings of remorse in him, which increased his anger.

'What the mischief has that to do with it if we *have* been friends for five-and-forty years?' he was asking himself, while he wiped his forehead with a large sulphur-coloured silk handkerchief. Then he turned, for Admiral Brown had addressed him as 'General Green.'

'It's my go now,' said the Admiral.

'I have done with you, sir!' exclaimed the General pettishly. 'I wish to hold no further communication with you, even by letter.'

'Dare say,' said the Admiral. 'You brought an accusation against my boy just now. Well, *you've* got to apologise.'



'I'll see all the Brown family in Hanover first, sir!'

'Unfortunately we have no estates there. Allow me to tell you that your daughter is a'—

'A what, sir? Out with it. After that you'll say I'm one, I suppose. There's Sir Titus also; perhaps he's one as well. Robert Brown, I'd never have thought you, of all men, would have gone out of your way to call me a liar.'

'No, nor I. But I've come here expressly to tell you you're something else. You're a silly old fool, Bill Green—that's what you are.'

'A silly old fool! Old fool! Thank you. And now perhaps once more you will give me the great advantage of your absence.'

'By no means. Where is the minx?'

'Minx, sir?'

'That daughter of yours. She's not fit to pick up my Eric's tennis-balls for him. How dared she do such a thing? You've got hold of the wrong end of the stick, my friend; and, by Harry! I'll warn you up before I've done with you!'

General Green sat down on one of the temple steps. 'The Lord give me patience!' he whispered.

'Precisely. You'll want all the stock you can get anyhow. Who told you my boy had kissed your enchanting daughter—who, sir?'

'Who, sir? The best witness in the world, Sir Titus Beach, the gentleman who is about to become my son-in-law. I want no more credible witness, sir.'

'Poor devil!' exclaimed the Admiral; 'he has my sincerest sympathy. And yet, no; on consideration, he's well quit of her. The young woman who would deliberately sacrifice her own character and compromise that of one young man in order to insult her *fiancé* can be no great catch for any one.'

The General's hands began to shake; also his head. There was a lack-lustre look in his eyes as he fastened them upon Admiral Brown, and his breathing was very rapid.

'Well, what does he say, this fellow Beach? What's he going to do?' proceeded the Admiral.

'Do, sir? He says he has half a mind not to have anything more to say to her!' The General shot out these words as if they were his ultimate degradation.

'Bravo, Beach! Green, I'm really sorry for you. If you feel like yourself again and will take me on at piquet to-night as usual, I tell you what I'll do. I'll keep it all as dark as'—

There was a weird cracking sound. The General had drawn one of the deepest breaths in his experience.

'My dear fellow, what has happened to you? Was it a rib?' asked the Admiral, with real concern.

The General winked fast, and looked very angry indeed; never yet had his corset thus betrayed him. But distraction was in sight in the

shape of his daughter. The girl was coming along the pine-walk with her pug dog held by a string. She looked as graceful as the Lady Hygeia herself, and her pale-pink dress was quite as becoming as the statue's somewhat incomplete attire.

'There she is! Now we'll get at the truth!' said the General. 'That is,' he added pompously, 'my statements will receive the corroboration which I for one do not require.'

The Admiral hastily took snuff. 'She's a neat little craft, Green,' he murmured; 'but I'm afraid she doesn't steer true. However'—

The two veterans stumped towards Helena, whose face lit up with smiles. They did not see Master Eric in their background. The smiles were largely for him, though her greeting of the Admiral was warm enough to astonish that old man.

'I—I'll beg to be excused, Miss Green!' said Admiral Brown. 'Your father'—

'Merely desires a plain answer to an insulting question, my dear,' put in the General testily.

'Papa!' exclaimed the girl. But her astonishment was lost upon the General, for Eric Brown was now at hand with a telegram.

'I thought I'd bring it on,' he said. 'My father said you were here.—It came the moment you left, dad.'

The General snatched the envelope from Eric, giving him a look that would have been alarming if it had not been so grotesque. The message was from Sir Titus Beach: 'This to say good-bye. Under the circumstances, don't expect to be in England again for a year or two. Hope you understand. Sorry.'

Admiral Brown's face relaxed into a comfortable smile as he viewed Helena Green. He forgot his grievance against her.

'The impudent rascal!—the lying, knock-kneed little upstart!' cried the General.

'Father dear!' protested his daughter.

'I'll be "deared" by no one, miss,' continued the irascible old man. 'Pon my word, I'll not be answerable for my senses! Here's one fellow charging you with making that young man kiss you in public, and'—

'It is true, papa,' said Helena Green in a whisper. Her cheeks were as pink as her dress, but her mouth and eyes were steady.

'True! You did—did you?'

'Take him to a seat, Eric!' said Admiral Brown quietly.

The old warrior had collapsed, and was held up apparently by his daughter at one side and Eric Brown at the other. He allowed them to guide him to a bench, where he breathed in heavy gasps.

'Papa dear!' lamented his daughter, 'what is it? Is it your heart?'

The General raised his eyes towards the Admiral. 'Heart be hanged!' he said faintly; and then, with yielding in his gaze, 'Read that, Brown.'

'Well! well! well! well!' said the Admiral when he had read the telegram; then he looked at his son and the General's daughter and smiled.

'We're well quit of him, sir!' exclaimed General Green suddenly.

'That may be,' said the Admiral pensively. 'But my boy's character has to be considered now. When a young man is to all intents and purposes kissed in public'—

Helena Green blushed divinely.

'Shut up, dad!' said Eric Brown.

'Once for all, let's settle it,' interrupted the General sternly. 'Was there anything between you two here or hereabouts yesterday afternoon?'

Eric Brown said not a word, but Helena Green spoke out like a hero.

'It was Eric's birthday, papa,' she explained, 'and I—I said he might kiss me.'

'You said—do you mean that he asked if he might'—

But the Admiral intervened with a boisterous laugh that cleared the air like a thunderstorm.

'My dear Green,' he said afterwards, 'that settles everything. Fate's stronger than a couple of old

hulks like you and me. And, by Harry! I'm not sorry. There's no one's daughter I'd sooner see Eric married to. He's not a pauper either. Gets all his poor mother's money, you know.'

The General was beaten completely. His astonished eyes wandered from one to another of the three. But the mention of Eric Brown's pecuniary circumstances recalled him to himself.

'*She's* in the same case,' he murmured, nodding at Helena. 'My wife's property was entailed, you know.'

At these words Admiral Brown stooped and linked his arm into that of his friend. 'Come along, old chap; we'll just leave them together,' he said.

'The titled nincompoop!' muttered the General, yielding to the Admiral's movement.

'Ay, he's all that,' said the Admiral. Then, turning to the girl: 'Fie, fie, my dear! but you've made us all happy.'

'Come, Brown,' exclaimed General Green impatiently, 'I'm quite ready for a totter; and, if you feel in the humour, I—I'll challenge you to a game of piquet this very minute.'

## THE GREAT NORTHERN DIVER ON THE ABERDEENSHIRE COAST.



SINCE the Rattrayhead Lighthouse came into operation, four years ago, the writer, in his leisure hours, has had opportunities not hitherto enjoyed in the district of observing in its native element the habits and characteristics of that noble bird the great northern diver. Notes of these observations may probably, therefore, interest lovers of our feathered friends, though not perhaps meeting the requirements of the naturalist.

The northern diver, though comparatively little known, is a large and powerful bird, measuring from twenty-six to thirty inches in length, and about five feet from tip to tip of outstretched wings. It is beautifully marked when in full plumage, and more than vies with the gannet as king of our sea-birds. Divers generally arrive on our coast about the end of October, after the mergansers and long-tailed ducks have been there feeding for a week or two. When on the wing their flight is very swift and high, on a straight course and with neck at full stretch. Though apparently powerful on the wing, these birds seldom take flight except when migrating to their breeding-haunts or distant fishing-grounds; indeed, they are rarely seen to rise out of the water. If suddenly surprised or shot at, the cormorant may take wing; whereas the diver will quickly and quietly slip under the surface. Even when changing their feeding-ground along

the shore, the distance is covered by rapid swimming, mostly under the surface.

On arrival the northern divers are usually seen singly, sometimes in twos or threes; they are never in large numbers—not more than nine may be seen at one time. By the seaside visitor they are seldom noticed; as they keep a long distance from the shore it is difficult to distinguish them from cormorants, which are much more common.

Different opinions are held regarding the northern divers' use of their wings under water. I have also seen it stated that when they sink the head disappears last. From close observation I am of opinion that this is erroneous; certainly I have never seen them dive in that way. Undisturbed, they very quietly and slowly slip under water head first, their large black feet often spurting to the surface as they impel their bulky bodies downwards. Compared with cormorants, shags, and mergansers, the northern divers can hardly be said to dive, for they appear to make no exertion, and do not, like the first-named birds, raise themselves out of the water and forcibly take a dive; nor have I noticed that they use their wings under water.

Some of the other diving-birds—for example, the red-throated diver, cormorant, merganser, and goosander—do not use their wings under water; but the eider-duck, the long-tailed and scoter ducks, guillemots, razor-bills, auks, and puffins

use their wings vigorously below the surface. I did once see the cormorant flying under water, but it was when chased and fatigued. The shags, or green cormorants, and mergansers are beautiful divers. They do not excel the guillemot or long-tailed duck in rapidity; but in agility and gymnastic display they certainly do. The body is raised completely out of the water, and a close observer can see that for a second the bill, feet, and tail only touch the water, thus forming two complete arches, the feet being as double piers in the centre.

When fishing, the northern divers do not go quickly over the ground, but remain for a long time near the same spot. They work singly; even though others are in the vicinity seldom fishing close together, as do most other diving-birds. On the Aberdeenshire coast they fish generally in water from one to two fathoms deep, preferring the black, rocky, weed-grown bottom to the sandy patches. At times—when they are probably feeding on small shellfish or crustacea, which they swallow under water—they bring nothing to the surface; at other times they seldom rise without spoil of some sort. Their sharp eyes are ever on the lookout for enemies, especially when they rise to the surface with a fish or crab, for the herring-gull is ready to pounce down for a share of the spoil; then the diver slips under again for a short time, and, if compelled, may perhaps swallow its prey there.

A favourite food of the northern divers is the spider-crab, of which they consume great numbers; and little time is spent in disposing of them after coming to the surface—a vigorous shake sends some of the claws flying, then a crush or two with the bill, and over they go. The comper or dog-fish, a shore fish with spiny head and large mouth—the fish with which boys make sport by fixing a small piece of cork on the spine at each side of the head, then laugh at the frantic endeavours of the fish when liberated to sink to the bottom—is also a favourite food of the northern divers. Even where other kinds of small fish, eels, &c., are abundant, I observed it was always the comper they came up with. More or less time, in proportion to size, is occupied before they are swallowed. The fish first undergoes a bruising process; the powerful bill is repeatedly opened to the full extent, and then slowly closed on the victim till it is in a fit state for swallowing. I have several times seen them with flounders about six or seven inches in diameter, and watched with curiosity to ascertain how the fish would be swallowed. This is accomplished by crushing, as with the comper; it takes longer, however. Sometimes twenty minutes may be occupied with one fish. Several visits are made under water during the process of crushing, the reason for which can only be guessed; perhaps the softening process is aided by pressure against rocks and stones. At any rate, before the attempt is made to swallow

the flounder the bones appear to be thoroughly broken up, for the fish is doubled together fin to fin like a pancake. After such a tit-bit the bird leisurely dabbles in the water with its bill; whether imbibing water or using it for washing and embrocation, after the lengthened crushing process, it is impossible to say.

Only twice have I noticed the northern diver in pursuit of saith and sand-eels near the surface; and, the water being clear, its movements could be distinctly seen. In these attempts it did not appear to be successful, unless it swallowed the fish while in pursuit; but I do not think it did so. Though slow and easy in all their movements on the surface, the divers show their speed and agility in the pursuit below the surface, turning and twisting in all directions. By the aid of the telescope I have followed them to the bottom in some of their fishing adventures, and have seen them go from tuft to tuft of seaweed, apparently poking underneath; but their submarine proceedings were observed only very indistinctly.

The roughest weather evidently does not trouble the northern divers. They actually dive and fish among the breaking billows, coming up among the whitest of surf. Guillemots, razor-bills, and puffins are occasionally washed ashore, where also the cormorant and shag have at times to rest when storms prevent them reaching their rocky homes; but the divers never seem to be in difficulty or compelled to leave their native element. When resting after successful fishing, they float lightly on the water with the tide, their black legs and feet flapping on either side at right angles from the body, as if maimed and useless.

The divers have a peculiar call-note, or hoot, like a prolonged 'Hoo-oo!' but it is seldom heard except in spring, when, if there be more than one about, they will reply to each other, even when far apart. About the end of April they all leave for their northern breeding-haunts, and many are seen passing northwards after the local birds have gone.

#### RONDEAU: AT SET OF DAY.

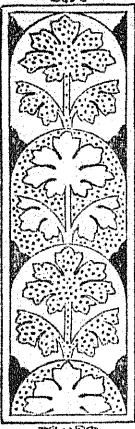
At set of day the long, lithe shadows creep  
From out the west where the last sunbeams stray;  
Afar at sea the dark-blue grows more deep,  
The opal foam upon the waves turns gray,  
And the light breezes murmur low of sleep.

A subtle fragrance the calm air doth steep  
From lily bells and lilac plumes that sway,  
While love-sick dew drops their pearly tear-drops weep,  
At set of day.

The lowing kine pass on their homeward way  
Through quiet fields and lanes where hedge-birds cheep.  
My heart sings songs my lips could never say  
At morn or noon; but, ah! strange pulses leap,  
And Love has many a passionate prayer to pray  
At set of day.

CONSTANCE FARMAR.





# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

MISS MARY KINGSLEY.

**T**HE articles 'Nursing in West Africa' in the June number of this *Journal* were probably Miss Mary Kingsley's latest papers, indeed, they appeared just a few days before her death. They were characteristic of her vigorous and independent thought and quaint and humorous expression.

The death of Miss Kingsley is a loss to the public no less than it is to personal friends, for her keen and sympathetic study of West African problems—administrative, commercial, and social—had given weight to her views, and entitled her to claim attention for them; while her gentleness, alertness of mind, and her stores of original observation made her a singularly interesting companion to those who shared her friendship.

Miss Kingsley had hereditary title to literary distinction. Her uncles, Charles and Henry Kingsley, have their place in literature; and her father, Dr George Kingsley, is remembered for his entertaining South Sea narrative, *The Earl and the Doctor*. Yet it was not without surprise that her first book, *Travels in West Africa*, was received and so widely read. Adventures in travel so original and novel had seldom been described, and the picturesque irregularity of her style added piquancy to the narrative; while the reader marvelled that any one, still more that any woman, should have wandered in such solitary fashion through almost pathless forests, often among cannibal tribes, without losing her life, and perhaps being eaten.

The force of character which carried her through difficulties was not governed by mere love of adventure. She steadily pursued two main objects: the collection of natural history specimens, especially of the fishes and insects of that region, which hitherto had only been imperfectly examined; and the study of the superstitions and fetiches of the various native tribes—a study for which her earnest sympathy with the natives specially qualified her, and also enabled her to realise to a remarkable degree their ideas and feelings. It

was doubtless that sympathy which attached her guides—often cannibals—to her, and gave her influence over the savage chiefs encountered in her journeys. Trade, too, is a persuasive missionary; and the knowledge that Miss Kingsley came from the traders, to whom the natives looked for the goods they coveted, gave her a measure of security. How one so quiet and unassuming, and not free from timidity when at home, could endure the physical exertion and moral strain of tramping through forests and wading swamps, alone among hordes of savages, is matter for wonderment; and it seems marvellous and sad that a constitution which resisted the malaria of West Africa should yield to hospital-fever at the Cape.

It was in 1893 that Miss Kingsley, for the first time in her life, 'found herself in possession of five or six months not heavily forestalled;' and despite ghastly warnings from informants, who advised her to make friends with the Wesleyans, 'because they alone had a hearse with feathers,' she hardened her heart and closed with West Africa. Becoming enamoured of the country, its weird fascination drew her thither again in 1894 for a longer stay; and in that year and 1895 she explored the West African coast from Sierra Leone to the river Ogowé, in French Congo, and wandered through the country of the cannibal Fan tribes, and also the Gaboon region, the home of the gorilla.

The variety of native customs provided endless interest. Nature provides the head of the native with a woolly protection from the sun, yet the inhabitants of the island of Fernando Po wear hats, but no other garment save a coating of grease, an armlet of beads for a pocket, into which the knife or pipe is conveniently stuck, and for a purse a belt of shells, these being the currency of the country. Some mainland tribes prefer to wear large lumps of ever-dropping fat in their ears and in their hair.

In passing through the Fan tribes, often at feud with each other, Miss Kingsley took guides of the same cannibal race; and on entering each new village a palaver with the chief was necessary

before shelter and safety could be assured. On one occasion the chief, hostile or hungry, demanded the surrender of her guides. This was refused, and the palaver became loud and excited. Miss Kingsley kept in front of the guides, and, while maintaining the palaver, backed slowly to the steep bank overhanging the river where her boat lay. Over this the guides leaped and rushed to the boat, followed by Miss Kingsley, amid a shower of arrows. The boat was paddled swiftly and safely down the river in the dusk. The next day the chief, penitent or still hungry, sent a messenger with apologies, begging her to return. The invitation was declined with thanks.

At another village, being lodged in a chief's hut, her curiosity was attracted by a bag, with an evil odour, hanging on the wall. The contents, shaken out into her hat, proved on examination to be a collection of human remains—a hand, three big-toes, four eyes, two ears, and other portions of human bodies. The contents were hastily replaced, and the bag again hung up.

On the Gaboon River her guide one day called her to creep quietly through the bushes, and then she saw a family of five gorillas—an old male, three females, and a young one. The guide sneezed, which alarmed the gorillas, and they fled with a bark and a howl, the old male swinging from bough to bough like an acrobat on the trapeze.

On another day Miss Kingsley and her two guides came suddenly upon a solitary male gorilla, who, as usual, had appropriated a forest glade as a park for his private enjoyment. Furious at the intrusion, the brute, instead of fleeing, came shambling towards them, growling fiercely. 'Shoot him,' whispered Miss Kingsley. 'I dare not,' said the guide, 'until he comes quite close. I have only one gun; the other is out of order. If I miss he will kill us.' The gorilla came nearer; rearing himself on his hind-legs, he beat his breast and roared, just as Du Chaillu described long ago; then, running forward, he stopped and roared again, and again ran forward until quite close. Then the guide fired, and the gorilla dropped dead.

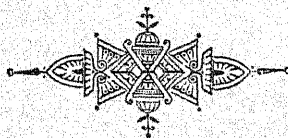
The insect pests were almost as formidable as the gorillas, and much more numerous. The travelling ants go forth in armies, and bite and devour every living thing they encounter. Only streams will divert their march. While Miss Kingsley was walking with a lady and gentleman,

her two companions suddenly leaped into a water-tub to escape the ants. There was no room in the tub for Miss Kingsley, and before she could recover from surprise she was attacked and almost devoured by swarms of these creatures. Her clothes were torn almost to rags before she could free herself from the tormentors.

Many know how good a lecturer Miss Kingsley was, and her lectures were illustrated by lantern-slides. One slide showed magnified figures of some of the worst insect-pests of the country. She had presented natural history specimens to the *savants* at South Kensington, who found some of the insects new and interesting. Speaking of her reception by these gentlemen, Miss Kingsley said, 'They were very civil, and said many kind things; and'—pointing to a ferocious-looking creature—'I suppose they meant it as a compliment: they have named that beast after me!'

Miss Kingsley's second book, which is not less important if less entertaining, deals rather with questions of government and trade than with adventure, and gives a further and curious detailed account of native superstitions. In other short papers she expressed her views of what was needed in various ways to promote the welfare of the country in which her interest centred. Although her stirring appeals are now silenced, it is hoped that the interest she excited in West Africa will not die with her, and that West Africans will long cherish the memory of the kindly and energetic Mary Kingsley.

Mr Alfred L. Jones, as chairman of the African Trade Section of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, passed a well-merited eulogium on Miss Kingsley for the courage, ability, and honesty with which she had endeavoured to solve the problems of life and trade in West Africa. Mr Jones, who is one of the leading authorities on all matters connected with West African trade, as head of the Elder-Dempster Shipping Company, of a West India company, and of other shipping companies, said that West Africa and West African trade had benefited enormously by Miss Kingsley's efforts. This same gentleman has backed up the proposal to establish a 'Mary Kingsley Hospital for Tropical Diseases' in Liverpool by an offer of a donation of £1000, and other large subscriptions are forthcoming. No more practical memorial could be reared to the memory of one who was nothing if not useful and practical.



## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

## CHAPTER XII.—WHAT HAPPENED AT THE OLD MILL.



COLONEL LEPARD'S overbearing spirit chafed sorely at the disarrangement of his ideas which my arrival and my persistent monopolisation of mademoiselle's society occasioned. I judged that he was not the kind of man to suffer this sort of thing for any length of time without bearing and showing resentment, and I was curious to see what he would be moved to do.

His ill-humour had so far found expression only in black looks and deprecatory scowls. But the gallant Colonel was accustomed to more forcible methods; and the saving grace of patience, of which the Abbé and Madame Mère were by instinct and by training rare examples, found no place in him. Like his brothers in arms, his strong point was in forcing the fighting. He was a French soldier, and so he could not wait; and, though I only learned this later, time pressed with him.

When mademoiselle and I sought the terrace after breakfast next morning, the Colonel joined us, with an assumption of good fellowship which sat so ill upon him that it did not deceive us for a moment. He took up his position on the opposite side of mademoiselle, and paced up and down beside us in a way that would have been annoying if it had not been so infinitely amusing; but mademoiselle did not see anything amusing in it. It was to her wholly annoying; and by the frostiness of her manner, which diverted and charmed me greatly, she made her sentiments so apparent that the Colonel could not fail to understand them. However, he was troubled by no feelings of delicacy or diffidence, and stuck to his post and talked away to mademoiselle, till at last she bade us both good-day and slipped away into the house.

I should dearly have liked to kick the Colonel off the terrace for the unseemliness of his behaviour and for the deprivation I suffered in consequence; but that was not permissible, so I contented myself with walking away towards the woods, leaving him in possession of the field. As tactics, however, this move of the Colonel's was a bad one, and led to results the opposite of what he had hoped for.

I had my own views as to the course we might pursue under the circumstances. But I preferred waiting to see what line mademoiselle would take; and she did exactly what I hoped she would do.

When we met before breakfast the next morning she said to me, 'I shall walk in the woods to-day. Will you meet me at the front door immediately after breakfast?'

Perhaps the grateful look I gave her showed her more than the simple expectation of the enjoyment of her company, for her sweet face flushed gloriously for a moment, and she hastened to the table.

As we entered the woods a side-glance showed us the Colonel pacing the terrace in solitary expectancy, and for a moment our eyes met in laughing congratulations on our escape.

We strolled on through the woods, enjoying the novel immunity from observation, and extended our walk farther than we intended.

'I am only sorry that I seem unable to make any advance in the other matter you have at heart,' I said.

'Yes,' she sighed, 'it is weary work waiting for something to turn up, when you know he is eating out his heart in his prison; but I do not see what you can do but wait.'

Some three miles down the river stands the ruined mill which goes by the name of Bessancy, though the village of the same name is a good mile farther on. In the pools by the broken weir lurk the heaviest fish of the river, and many a time had Vaurel and I harried them.

We sat for a time on the river-bank looking down the long sweeps of water, with the trees drooping into them. Then we turned to go home, and then—this happened.

I was walking by the side of mademoiselle, when a sudden slight sound behind caused me to glance backward; and then, quicker than it takes to tell, the wild figure of a man was leaping at us and striking blindly with a great rusty iron rod which he whirled with both hands.

I knew him at a glance, though he was an awful figure to look at—hair and beard and moustache all unkempt and awry, his clothes in tatters, his eyes burning like coals, no shoes on his feet—Roussel, as mad as a hatter, and bent on smashing us into pulp if he could manage it.

I stepped hastily back between him and mademoiselle, and cried, 'Run, mademoiselle!—run! I will tackle him!'

She hesitated, and then sped away, stumbling in her fright. Then the iron rod came down on my left arm, and it fell useless; but before he could hoist his weapon again I rushed in and caught him on his ragged chin with my fist. He staggered back and dropped the bar. As he recovered himself he glared wildly, gnashed his teeth, and spat at me. I thought he was coming on again; but, instead, he suddenly tossed up his hands, all red with iron-rust, and fled away down the river-bank. When I was sure he was gone for good I turned to follow mademoiselle.

She was waiting at a distance, and now came



to meet me. Her face was very white, and her eyes were suspiciously bright. We both knew it was Roussel.

The trustful, clinging contact of her trembling hand on my arm on our way back home sent my blood spinning, and I counted the delight of it cheaply bought at the price of the other arm which hung limp by my side.

Arrived at the Château, mademoiselle sent off messengers hot-foot for Prudent Vaurel and the village leech, and between them they bound up my arm and applied homely remedies for the reduction of the bruise. The bone did not seem to be broken; but for the present the arm was useless.

That done, Vaurel set off to collect the villagers for the purpose of hunting down the madman; but they were not half so keen on seeking the live man as they had been on finding his dead body. They armed themselves with hasty weapons—bill-hooks and poles and an occasional rusty sword—and set off in a noisy group, bunched well together, with Juliot the gendarme in the van. They beat all the woods in the neighbourhood of the old mill, but, as might have been expected, without any results; and they came straggling back in the dusk, somewhat crestfallen, maybe, at their want of success, but satisfied at all events that they had returned with whole skins.

So the country-side was infested with a new terror. Mademoiselle and I could take no more strolls in the farther woods, and the villagers went about after nightfall with their chins on their shoulders and cold creeps on the other side. But Prudent Vaurel spent much time by himself in the woods, and for many days no wood-pigeons appeared on the table at the Château.

The accident to my arm and the danger to which mademoiselle had been exposed caused quite a little ripple of interest in the Château.

Colonel Lepard was, I think, not ill pleased, as was perhaps only natural in him, since it was in endeavouring to avoid his company that we had fallen into what was worse, or at least more outwardly violent.

Monsieur Dienfoy was extremely sympathetic, and his shrewd eyes rather conveyed the idea that he considered I had scored in the matter.

Madame the Duchesse bore my wounds with a meek resignation which suggested that it was a dispensation of Providence at which she was not in the least surprised, and that it was more than likely that I richly deserved all I had got.

As for myself, I was well satisfied, for mademoiselle was more than ever gracious and charming, and our sense of companionship, even in the presence of the others, was warmer and sweeter than ever.

It behoved mademoiselle not to wander far afield after our encounter with Roussel, and pending definite news of his capture. Our morning walk was, therefore, once more confined to

the terrace; and, as the terrace was free to all, and Colonel Lepard made a point of being there at the same time as ourselves, we had perforce to tolerate him as best we could.

On the second day relief came unexpectedly from the outside. It was a dull, heavy day, with a threatening of thunder; and when we came out after breakfast we stood for a time looking at the strange aspect of the sky over the woods towards Bessancy, from behind which the clouds were boiling up like the black smoke from a steamer's funnel.

The Colonel was on his beat already, and after a solitary stroll, in which he passed and repassed us every second minute, he halted in front of us with some remark to mademoiselle about the approaching storm, and then wheeled into line and joined us in our walk. But we had only paced the length of the terrace once, when a stranger turned the corner from the front of the house and came along to meet us. He was in military uniform; and, as he stood bowing and raising his *képi* to mademoiselle, I recognised him as the dark-faced officer who had inquired the way to the Château from Vaurel and myself that other day on the road near the village.

'Ah! it is you, my friend,' said Lepard in a tone the reverse of cordial.

'But, yes, my Colonel, it is I, myself. Won't you do me the honour of introducing me to your friends?'

It seemed to me that there was a suspicion of insolence or bravado in his voice and manner.

Lepard hesitated, and as I glanced at his face it was hard and black. Then he said, 'But, certainly!—Mademoiselle, this is Captain Zuyler of the artillery, attached to the General Staff, previously in Algiers.—Monsieur Lamont—Captain Zuyler.'

'If you will permit, mademoiselle,' said Colonel Lepard, 'we shall walk in the park. Captain Zuyler no doubt comes on business;' and, saluting us, he linked his arm in the Captain's and drew him reluctantly away in the direction of the woods.

I told mademoiselle in a few words how these two had passed Vaurel and myself that other night near the station, and of the impression their talk left on my mind, and how, if one could hide in the Colonel's pocket, one might learn many things about Gaston from what passed between those two.

She grew very thoughtful; and when at last the rain began to fall in heavy spattering gouts like the dropping fire of an advance-guard, she withdrew into the house and to her own room.

The storm came rolling up black as night over the woods, and the lightning flickered venomously among the tree-tops, throwing them into ghastly pallid relief that was almost continuous, so rapidly did the flashes follow one another.

I stood at the window watching, and as I watched I saw the figure of a man issue from the woods and come labouring along the path. Even at that distance I could see that it was the Colonel, and that he was bareheaded and in evident distress of some kind or other.

In my surprise and desire for information I started out to meet him, forgetting for the moment that I was not supposed to speak French.

Fortunately, M. Dieufoy had seen him also; and as I came out on the terrace he issued from the window of another room, and we ran together to meet the Colonel.

'Monsieur le Colonel, whatever has happened?' cried M. Dieufoy, for as we drew near we saw that his head was bruised and bleeding, and his uniform stained and of course wet through; and he staggered blindly in his walk. His face was like chalk as he looked at us, and he raised his hands and dropped them to his side as an intimation of the inexpressible.

'That devil of a madman,' he said hoarsely, 'stole upon us while we sheltered in the old mill. He struck down Zuyler with an iron beam and smashed his head in. I tried to grapple with him; but he got one blow in on me too, and then turned and ran. I could not follow, for the blow had turned me sick and dizzy.'

'And your friend?' inquired the Abbé.

'The poor Zuyler! He is dead,' said the Colonel, more hoarsely than before. '*Mon dieu*, yes! His head went like an egg-shell! He was dead when I lifted him.'

One on each side we assisted him into the house and up to his room, where I left the Abbé to attend to his injuries, while I sent for mademoiselle in order to get her to summon Vaurel and some of the villagers to seek Captain Zuyler, or what was left of him if he was really dead as the Colonel said.

Mademoiselle came down at once, and her face was still aghast at my news when two men passed along the terrace in front of the window, and mademoiselle exclaimed:

'There is Prudent now, and Juliot with him. How fortunate!'

We went out towards the front door, and the two men met us on the step. Vaurel looked savage with disgust. The gendarme was surly and obstinate.

'Listen, mademoiselle. This pig-headed Juliot wants to make out that I have murdered a man; and just simply because I found him lying there covered with blood and with the top of his head bashed in, and was trying to be of some assistance to him,' cried Vaurel.

'The man is dead,' said Juliot doggedly, 'and you were with him, and there was no one else there. *Voilà!*'

'And did you see me kill him?' asked Vaurel excitedly.

'No; because I was not there. If I had been there I should have seen.'

'Ass!' shouted Vaurel.

'That's as it may be,' said Juliot composedly.

'Send for M. l'Abbé, mademoiselle, if I may suggest it,' I said; and she ran at once herself to fetch him, while Hortense and her mother fluttered about helplessly in the rear.

M. Dieufoy came down at once with mademoiselle, and in a few quiet words explained to Juliot that he was in the wrong, since Colonel Lepard had already explained how Captain Zuyler came by his death. Juliot sulkily agreed that that quite altered the complexion of affairs; and Vaurel exulted over his downfall, and assured him that he would not forget that he had believed him, Prudent Vaurel, capable of committing a murder.

The storm was growling and rumbling overhead all this time, and it had grown very dark; and when M. Dieufoy suggested that the two should go back to bring home the Captain's body, it was not surprising, in the present state of feeling between them, that neither of them showed any inclination to do so.

Finally, mademoiselle prevailed on Vaurel to go up to the village to get assistance, and he returned with a dozen old men with torches. They could have found their way without the torches well enough, but these seemed to give them courage. Mademoiselle gave them each a glass of red wine, and they flickered away in an unsteady procession, and the woods swallowed them up; then, after a couple of hours, we saw them coming back, slowly and heavily, because they were old men and because of the burden they carried.

We sent the womenfolk away before they reached the house, and then had the body carried into a small unused room on the ground floor.

He was a horrible sight, though the heavy rain had washed away some of the more repulsive traces of the tragedy. The blows must have been terrible ones—I could imagine only too well what they were like—for the top of the head was fairly beaten in.

'God rest his soul!' said the Abbé, looking musingly down on the twisted face; 'but'—and he left his reservation incomplete.

'Did you know him, Monsieur l'Abbé?' I was tempted to ask in English.

'I knew him,' he said. 'He was not good. Still, "*de mortuis*"—you know. We will speak of him no more.'

We left Vaurel and one of the villagers to arrange him, and as we quitted the room I inquired of the Abbé how Colonel Lepard was faring.

'He is very sick,' he said; 'but his wound is a very slight one. It was much of a shock to him to have his friend beaten down before his eyes like that.'

We saw nothing of the Colonel during the next day. M. Dieufoy himself sent to Rennes for an

undertaker, and communicated the details of the affair to the authorities. On the following day the Colonel got heavily into the family carriage and followed the creaking cart which carried his

friend to the station, and then went on with the body to Paris. It seemed to me that we were in for a quiet time at the Château, and that my mission was at a standstill.

## PASTIMES IN MODERATION.

By F. G. AFLALO.



HE adoring Boswell tells us that Dr Johnson, challenged by a lady as to his reason for defining 'pastern' as the knee of a horse, promptly replied, 'Ignorance, madam—pure ignorance;' and, indeed, definition is always so invidious a task that it is pleasant to glide very rapidly over any explanation of the term 'sport' by substituting the more general 'pastime.' In the *Puritan*, for instance, a gentleman asked (and, of course, answered, else he had never asked it) the following simple question: 'Is there a single sport which is now unconnected with betting?' Obviously, to this gentleman's way of thinking, trout-fishing is not a sport, neither is fox-hunting; his notion of sport in all probability amounted to horse-racing, athletics, and possibly yachting. Others are as arbitrary in restricting the application of the word to the taking of animal life—to shooting, fishing, hunting, and the like. By the word 'pastimes,' however, I venture to indicate not alone these two distinct groups of recreations, but also such games as cricket, football, and golf, and such physical exercises as boxing, wrestling, and gymnastics.

Nor is the definition of the word 'sportsman' one whit clearer. The word is in any case applied at the present day with a carelessness by no means gratifying to those who take sport seriously. Knickerbockers and rainbow stockings make neither a crack shot nor a good fisher; nor are white boots and peaked cap essential elements of yachting lore. A man is not necessarily a sportsman because he loses money on a horse-race, or because he sits for seven hours in the mound stand at Lord's. Fox is English for *Reinecke*, and hare is every whit as good a word as puss; and a sportsman is not made by talking of 'willow' when he means a cricket-bat, 'pig-skin' when he would speak of riding, or 'leather-hunting' as a picturesque equivalent of fielding the cricket-ball. Eccentric dress and outrageous slang are quite unnecessary to the proper cultivation of true sport; nor is the censorious cant of sundry enthusiasts anything short of inelegant and the reverse of sportsman-like. The intolerance of the shooting-man who looks down on angling, or of the hunting-man who has but a shrug for either, is only a shade less ludicrous than the dogmatic fastidiousness of the salmon-fisher who shuns, as he might a leper, the drabber for barbel, or of the knight of the dry fly who spurns the squire of the wet.

The object of the following notes is, as will be seen, no unqualified attack or defence of our pastimes, either generally or individually, but rather a brief review of the arguments for moderation and against excess. The fact is that moderation and excess have the same relations in all questions affecting sports and pastimes as they have in every other episode of life. Cricket is undoubtedly a good thing; but we can have too much even of a good thing, and we can certainly have too much of cricket on the news-posters when such classical announcements as that 'Surrey ducks are cheap to-day,' or 'Essex eggs plentiful,' or, again, 'Ranji bothers 'em,' are permitted by those responsible to oust into small print and footnotes the grave affairs of State, the troubles in China, or the deliberations of Parliament. What must be the feelings of a respectable and intelligent foreigner as, groping carefully in the columns of his pocket dictionary, he seeks in vain some reasonable explanation of those startling manifestoes that set men and lads a-diving in their trousers-pockets for halfpence. The spectacle of thoroughbred horses racing for all they are worth over the flat is as noble a one as any man might wish to see; but betting, particularly on the part of those who never go within ten miles of a race-course, is not noble (whatever else it may be), nor are the ghoulds who fatten on 'tips' that they are unfortunately able (at half-a-crown the line) to advertise in respectable papers; and reformatories might do much for the urchins that make London streets hideous throughout the afternoon with their eternal shriek of 'Winner!' Angling, again, has rightly been styled the contemplative man's recreation; but his thoughts should be on the beauties of nature and not on the weight of challenge trophies. Shooting is a wonderful training for eye and hand, a school of the first order for endurance and precision; but it cannot be desirable that Londoners should add half-a-sovereign to the expenses of their fortnight's holiday for the privilege of maiming seagulls, nor that mighty hunters should gratify their lust by extinguishing whole genera of harmless and beautiful antelopes. Game preservation may imply the payment of many thousands of pounds in wages, the supply of cheap and wholesome food to the market, the salvation of much imposing scenery from the woodcutting Philistines who deface their country for small gain; but enormous bags and fashionable shoots, with the accompany-



ing fearful abuse of the tipping system, leave much to be desired.

Those who will not see two sides to a question are disqualified from discussing it, and one of two counts must fearlessly be faced by all who would undertake any defence of sport on general lines. The animal sports will always be open to the charge, more or less sustained, of cruelty; the athletics will as certainly have to be cleared of the not unfounded slur of commercialism.

The dangers and risks entailed by various sports on those who follow them may be employed in either support or condemnation of the sports themselves, according to the point of view. Considered apart from pure accident, danger is usually the result of excess; and accident, having no rule, should not in the very nature of it enter into any argument. Thus, two fatal accidents at the National Sporting Club since its opening nine years ago,\* two or three deaths in the cricket-field, a longer roll unfortunately at football, and even grimmer records in the hunting-field and coverts—these may perhaps constitute some argument against carelessness in sport, but surely not against sport itself. Fatalities with dangerous game arise not merely out of shooting, but out of shooting badly; and even in the gentler environment of the grouse moor or partridge shoot at home, far too little care is given to the proper handling of a gun in the intervals of shooting—a knowledge of considerably greater importance to all concerned than the mere accuracy of aim that occupies all the attention of nine shooting-men out of every ten.

A mild impeachment of sport is sometimes founded on the ailments induced by athletic exercise. Here again it is excess that is invariably to blame. Thus, rowing will soon find out a tendency to weak heart, but will not, I fancy, weaken a sound one. Dr Morgan shows, in his *University Oars*, that Oxford and Cambridge rowing-men survive the boat-race by forty years or more. Too much rowing may undoubtedly bring on staleness and lassitude; but all that is required to set matters right again is a rest. Cycling will, if overdone, be productive of much discomfort. The cyclist who scorches and then slacks will catch cold; and the cyclist who rides too far will suffer fatigue and nervous worry. Sleeplessness, particularly after a bout of night-riding, will follow the strain, always present though not always consciously felt, of steering. It should, however, be borne in mind by those who none too fairly attribute the narrow-chestedness and curvity of spine seen in so many bicyclists to the pastime itself, that the cycling fraternity is largely recruited from the sedentary classes. As for the much-discussed stooping attitude of the racing cyclist, it would be so difficult for him to race efficiently

with compressed lungs that it may be questioned whether this position can affect the lungs in such a degree as alleged. Carelessness or excess in the cyclist may be supplemented by faults in the machine; and a badly-constructed or wrongly-adjusted saddle placed too far forward may, I believe, especially in riding long distances on hard roads, induce local irritation and injury.

Shooting, of course, is an arduous exercise not slow to find out weak points, and it may bring on deafness, and also injury to the eyes. The deafness in the left ear, which is particularly severe in the case of revolver-shooting, with the sharper report of nitro powders, is said—so Mr Walter Winans informs me—to fall less heavily on those who keep the mouth open while shooting. The eye may also suffer from burnt particles, especially when nitro powders are shot against the wind. Nor is the hand quite free from penalty. The late Sir Henry Halford considered that rifle-shooting had a tendency to deform the fingers permanently; but those who habitually handle a gun are not likely to experience more than a permanent sore on the front of the forefinger of the right hand and a lump on the inside of the second finger. The taking of chills by those deerstalkers who run themselves into a perspiration and then get chilled to the marrow on a bleak hill-top cannot fairly be charged against the rifle. It is possible to achieve the same result by fast walking and unwise resting without any gun at all.

Any game practised in moderation must in a great degree command praise as an outdoor exercise: cricket and football in their respective seasons, golf at all times for the middle-aged who are no longer equal to the fatigue of cricket or the horseplay of football, or for those of younger years who prefer taking their exercise alone or in select company. The popularity of a game is a test of its cheapness rather than of any other excellence. Cricket and football are essentially the people's sports; tennis, rackets, and polo are the pastimes of the few; lawn-tennis and croquet, admirable institutions from a certain standpoint, are preferred by the gentle; and golf has, curiously enough considering the slight expenditure it entails, never, at any rate outside Scotland, taken a strong hold on those of very limited income, but has, both east and west of the Atlantic, and both north and south of the equator, fired only the more or less moneyed class. The secret of this limited popularity of golf in many countries is possibly to be sought in the lack of opportunity for competition before sedentary spectators; and this brings the argument to two somewhat important factors in the history of British pastimes—the looker-on and competition.

It can scarcely be denied that looking-on constitutes at the present day about nine-tenths of our so-called sport. The quaint misuse of the term 'sportsman,' already adumbrated, which permits its application to every one who shirks work to watch

\* Mr Angle, the well-known authority on boxing, tells me that he has acted as referee and judge at quite three thousand contests and competitions, and has not seen a third.

a cricket match or glove-fight need not perhaps detain us.

The looker-on suggests by his very presence competition, professionalism, gate-money, gambling, and a number of more or less disagreeable issues of sport on which the unchecked pen might overrun some folios of praise and many of blame. It is a present-day belief that competition is in itself a desirable condition of trade and politics and all else, having maybe evils of its own, but not the greater evils of monopoly; hurting perchance the weaker individual, but ultimately working for the greatest good of the majority. Within very wide limits indeed, modern states are chary of interfering in its free and legitimate operation. In altruistic mood, I bow to the doctrine. But, like cricket, patriotism, and some other British virtues, it is best in moderation. Competition is a good servant but a shocking master; as a fetich, it becomes one of the most baneful principles fostered by modern conditions of sport. When the success is everything and the effort nothing; where the play is made little of and the result is all-important, there look out for the decay of the true spirit of sport. Smart practice in football, judgment exaggerated to calculation in cricket, and far worse coggerly than either in horse-racing—such are the outward results of so disagreeable a preference. International fixtures are the best illustration of this competitive spirit in sport at both its best and its worst; and the year 1899 furnished abundance of example in the Australian test-matches, the Anglo-American University sports, and the struggle for the American Cup. The system of cricket matches played alternately on famous grounds at home and in the colonies is in itself excellent; but the unsportsmanlike partisanship of some onlookers and newspaper critics in this country during last summer, their ridiculous quest (in the phase of the moon or what not) for any reason but the right one of each draw or defeat, was rather worthy of schoolboys at Lord's; nor is it any consolation to have witnessed precisely the same bad form at Sydney and Melbourne. Nor can the veil be too hurriedly drawn over the disagreeable comments of an irresponsible press on the last cricketing tour in America. The annual repetition of the Anglo-American University sports, so successfully inaugurated and so keenly contested in 1898, would be admirable as a further bond between the great English-speaking nations; but such gallant and friendly rivalry should be marred by no ill-feeling, no dogmatic contrast of the amateur standards on either side of the Atlantic. In like manner our tenth failure during the last half-century to bring the yachting cup back to British waters might have been borne without so much of innuendo and hint of racing machines, of one-sided rules, of crowded course. If we do not approve the rules, why in the name of the fleet of Hiram of Tyre do we race under them? Such fixtures, unless they draw the English-speaking nations closer

together, were better abandoned. Sir Thomas Lipton's frank confession that the better man won was in pleasing contrast with some other criticisms.

It may surely be possible that the excessive cultivation of this passion for international trials of skill may be productive of no good, if not of some harm. Not very much can be said on this score against the recent visit of English footballers to three German cities, save that the unequal contests were a foregone conclusion. Football is not a game of German root, and the student of pastimes usually finds—and baseball and lacrosse, so popular on one side of the Atlantic, so coolly received on the other, admirably illustrate the point—that a process of selection has, in the evolution of games, established each on the soil and among the people best adapted to its popularity. On the disgusting exhibition last autumn of *boze v. savate*, in which a foul was apparently adjudged a victory, it is undesirable to say more than absolutely to condemn from the utilitarian point of view such futile attempts to equate two styles of national self-defence that can never, at any rate under such conditions, be reduced to comparable terms.

I must now return for a moment to the question of sport as a means of livelihood, with the accompanying complications arising out of doubtful amateurism and the general prostitution of sport to commerce. The elementary condition of sport is amusement as distinct from gain. Now, here comes the very quicksand of the whole excursion into the realms of argument. The difficulty may not be shirked; but there can be no reason for handling it with wanton clumsiness, or for the favourite habit of critics falling foul of the amateur-professional question with the antics of the bull in the china shop. There are, as we know, professional cricketers, footballers, bicycle-riders, and ivory-hunters who avowedly make a living out of pursuits followed by others for pure and unprofitable amusement. They are not, therefore, necessarily sportsmen; but the bare fact of their subsisting by one sport should by no means preclude the possibility of their being *bond-fide* amateurs of another. Abel might very well be a perfectly genuine amateur yachtsman, and Tom Richardson might equally well play amateur croquet. These individuals present no difficulty whatever. But there are others who are, on evidence of various worth, alleged to live less openly by their strength and skill. The cricketing secretary and the footballing schoolmaster are cases in point that I content myself with citing, only too thankful that the terms of the editorial invitation permit me to avoid any analysis of their claims to the amateur status. Apart, however, from such entire devotion to any game as a means of living, avowed or otherwise, another aspect of the connection between money and sport invites contemplation. It may perhaps be asserted without fear of contradiction that not two men

in a hundred who seriously take up horse-racing or pigeon-shooting make a profit of their hobby over any considerable number of years. It may, however, for the sake of argument, be supposed that one in the hundred does come out to the good. Yet this constitutes no earthly reason for assailing his amateur status. I do not, of course, refer to gains or losses through betting on the turf. Given the means to indulge so curious a fancy, and an independent love of horses and racing for their own sake, betting should be able to stand a good deal of attack. On the other hand, those who merely put money on outsiders without ever going near a race-course are not sportsmen, but merely gamblers; the most painful illustration of this class being found in the Australian labouring man, two-thirds of whose weekly pittance is claimed by the totalisator shops.

One word more, reverting to the onlooker in another phase. It is the fashion to abuse horse-racing on the score of the indifferent company that gathers round the course. Viewed dispassionately, this has simply nothing to do with the ethics of racing. Outpurses and coiners are just as likely to forgather in their spare time on the line of route followed by a wedding, a funeral, a Lord Mayor's show, or any other spectacle of beauty or interest. It is the business of the hawks to assemble near the pigeons; and a glorious work of art in a shop window affords just as excellent opportunities to the discriminating pickpocket as any race-course.

The value of our pastimes in education is a theme that cannot, after all that has gone before, be entered into. 'Moderation, moderation,' saith (or ought to say) the teacher. The healthy discipline of training and a self-denying diet and regular living cannot well be overrated on paper, yet it is not for a man to train himself into a mere record-breaking machine. School sports are admirable, and to Cheltenham College belongs the credit, I believe, of having started them nearly half-a-century ago—that is to say, ten years before the inauguration of the Oxford and Cambridge sports, and five-and-twenty years before the inception of the Amateur Athletic Association. On the grumble of 'play-masters,' who get educational posts on the strength of their cricket or football, others

have said their say; and compulsory school-games, which the late Mr Grant Allen somewhere compared to the hard conditions of the civilised life, have also been defended as the only sure antidote to loafing. And the loafer is neither morally nor physically a success either at school or in after-life. Even walking, made so much of as an exercise, may easily degenerate into mere loafing. If the loafer can put his thoughts into such language as Thoreau, much will be forgiven him; but the 'if' is a big one. Public-school masters have warmly attacked, and Lord Rosebery has warmly defended, the physical education cultivated beyond a very moderate degree; and Dr Welldon's firm refusal to extend the Eton and Harrow cricket match by the extra day, deemed necessary to put a stop to the unbroken monotony of undecided fixtures, has been interpreted as a protest against the undue attention to the result and the immoderate idolising of school athletics. Yet it is not all a matter of only physical training, for the majority of games are played at least as much with the head as with the hands and feet, judgment being often of greater importance than strength or skill. Gymnastics perhaps, at any rate in their simpler exercises, cannot be said to fall under this category, though they have other features to recommend them in the educational system.

In the vindication of sport, yet by no means in unqualified praise of all its phases, it would be easy to ramble on over a whole number of *Chambers's Journal*. Let me, in taking leave of the subject, venture the hope that some of the more picturesque sports that once occupied the leisured classes may ere long see a revival in this country. The theatrical pageantry of the chase, still revered in some almost feudal districts on the Continent, will never appeal to a British public. Yet the old French kings knew well that the hunt was the finest training for the battlefield; and the French *chasseurs* and German *jägers* are survivals of an age when sport was a monopoly of kings and warriors, and was pursued under the most spectacular conditions; and we have surely gone to the other extreme, and permitted the more picturesque sports of hawking and archery to fall almost into oblivion. This is matter for sincere regret.

## THE BISHOP AND THE CONSTABLE.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

**M**EANWHILE the two young men had entered the sitting-room in which Katie and Helen had so recently been conversing. Had they arrived a few minutes sooner the curious complications which ensued would never have taken place. If they had suspected for a moment that the girls were at the

inn they would certainly have done so, for, singularly enough, they happened to be the very persons whose prospects and shortcomings had been so frankly discussed. The fair-haired clergyman was Katie's *fiancé*, the Reverend Frank Ambrose, and his companion was Mr Arthur Dale, a briefless but wealthy barrister, who aspired to become engaged to the Bishop's niece.



Ambrose looked around him with the air of one familiar with his surroundings.

'This is the place I told you about,' he said. 'I propose we send for our traps, and stay here for a few days. In fact, I took it for granted that you wouldn't object, and so I told the folks at home to send on my letters here. Still, if you've any objection?'—

'No, no,' rejoined Arthur, with a sigh; 'it's all the same to me. I may as well stay here as anywhere else.'

Ambrose chuckled.

'Poor fellow!' said he, with a grin. 'No word from Helen yet—eh?'

'No,' replied Arthur drearily. 'Helen declines to write to me until I have secured her uncle's consent to our engagement.'

'What a model pair you are!' laughed Ambrose. 'Well, why don't you set about getting his consent? You know that the Bishop and the girls are staying at the Dean of Southpool's. Why not run over in the morning, and ask him in plain English to give his consent?'

Arthur shook his head mournfully.

'I daren't, Frank—to tell you the simple truth, I daren't,' he answered. 'So much depends on it, you see, and I've a presentiment that he won't be favourably impressed by me. I'm not like you. I've no push. When I meet a man for the first time I become semi-inarticulate. I generally impress a new acquaintance with the profound conviction that I am a fool. I want to choose a favourable time for meeting him—when he's in an exceptionally good humour, for instance, or the circumstances seem unusually promising.'

'Well, he's apt to judge by first impressions; so I'm told,' said Ambrose. 'I'm afraid I didn't make a very favourable impression on him, or he'd have offered me that living before now.'

'But what about your family living? Is there no chance of Jenkins resigning?'

'Not the slightest. And the venerable Jenkins—bless him!—is an evergreen. Ten years ago, when my father gave him the living, he was apparently in the last stages of consumption. Now he's fat and jolly and rosy, and good for another twenty years yet. Besides, to speak seriously, he's an awfully decent old fellow, and none of us would ever dream of asking him to resign.'

'And what are your prospects with regard to the Bishop's living?'

'Not so bad, I think. You see, I flatter myself that I know how to keep on the right side of him. I'll give you an instance, if it won't bore you.'

'Fire away.'

'Well, I had a sort of notion that I should like to doff my clerical toggery when I was away for my holidays. It struck me that the Bishop mightn't approve, and so I wrote to him. Got a reply by return. Care to see it?'

Arthur nodded, and Ambrose took a note from

his pocket and threw it towards him. This was the Bishop's verdict on the momentous question of clergymen wearing laymen's clothes:

'Speaking personally, I have the strongest possible objection to the clergy appearing in laymen's clothes. There are black sheep in every flock, and the black sheep might take advantage of the greater freedom such a practice might give them. To the best of my knowledge, I have no black sheep in my diocese; but I am bound to say that I could not repeat that statement with a clear conscience if I knew that any of my clergy were in the habit of dressing as laymen. You are, of course, at liberty to follow your own wishes in the matter; but you are now well acquainted with mine.'

'Pretty straight—isn't it?' asked Frank as Arthur handed him back the note.

'Yes, it is. Did you reply to it?'

'Certainly. I told him that, in spite of all temptations, I should figure in canonical raiment to the end of my days. The fact is that it's only in weather like this that I object to do so. Ah, my dear fellow! you don't know how I envy you those flannels of yours. You look so delightfully cool and comfortable, and I feel so warm and shabby, and all that sort of thing—don't you know? I say, just for the fun of the thing, let me have your cap and blazer and things, and try on my coat and vest. I'd like to see what sort of a parson you'd make.'

'All right,' rejoined Arthur, with the air of one who humours the harmless caprices of a child; 'but look here, you know, remember the Bishop is somewhere in the neighbourhood. Suppose he should drop in?'

'Pooh! No fear of that. Come along,' answered Frank, who, like many men who have to take life seriously, was inclined to be somewhat boyish in his hours of recreation. He threw off his coat and vest as he spoke; and, though it struck Arthur as being rather an idiotic proceeding, he followed his example, and in a few seconds they had made the exchange.

'Upon my word, you look first-rate,' exclaimed Ambrose, surveying his friend with a grin. 'Here, put on my hat and spectacles, and don't forget the collar. That's it. Good man. You'd make an ideal curate. How jolly it is to get into this toggery again! I must have a turn on the river before we change.'

They stood looking at each other and smiling at the comical transformation which the change of dress had effected, unconscious that keen and suspicious eyes were watching them through the partially-open doorway, and that their harmless if somewhat absurd proceedings had implanted a firm conviction in the breast of Mary the waitress that they were a couple of impudent swindlers. It was really not to be wondered at that Mary had no longer the least doubt that her suspicions were correct; for when Arthur had assumed

Frank's coat, vest, collar, hat, and spectacles, his resemblance to the criminal described in the letter to the editor of the *Higgleston Herald* was so exact that it might well have deceived one more wary than an enthusiastic amateur detective, stimulated by rosy visions of matrimonial bliss. In imagination she already saw Jewson ascending the ladder of promotion, and heard the pealing of the church bells celebrating their wedding. She could not hear the conversation which accompanied the exchange of clothes; and it never entered her head that two grown men, one of them a clergyman, would indulge in such a proceeding for the mere fun of the thing. Her heart beat high with hope as she glided stealthily away. Jewson's name would be in all the papers in the morning; and if he achieved fame and promotion it would be due to the promptitude with which she had detected the swindlers and packed off the boy to warn him.

In the meantime the young clergyman, attired in his friend's gay blazer, crimson tie, and boating cap—serenely unconscious of Mary's suspicions, of the hurried flight of the boy who was still urging his wild career in the direction of the police station, and of the presence of his lordship in the immediate neighbourhood—was laughing jovially at Arthur's appearance, and admiring the effect of his own costume in the mirror above the mantelpiece. Yet at that very moment the boy caught sight of Jewson's massive form in the distance; and up the path to the inn, though not in view of the window, strolled Katie, Helen, and the Bishop. Katie was radiant with smiles, for his lordship had at last given her a hint that he would at once write a note to Frank offering him the living of Little Southam.

It was Arthur, always anxious to observe the proprieties, who was the first to take alarm.

'Hush!' he exclaimed. 'I hear voices in the hall.'

'What does it matter?' replied Ambrose. 'It's only a few sightseers.'

'Suppose they come in here?'

'Who cares if they do?'

'They're coming, man,' said Arthur nervously. 'Be sensible. Let's change at once.'

'No, no; I'm too jolly comfortable. Besides, I want to see you play the parson. I wouldn't let you off now if it were the Bishop himself.'

Now, at that very moment the rich mellow voice of his lordship was heard in the passage outside. 'How interesting it is to revisit the scenes of one's youth!' he was saying. 'I have not been here since I was quite a young man. I think you have a room overlooking the river. We will wait there while you are getting the young ladies a cup of tea.'

At the sound of the Bishop's voice Ambrose turned crimson and was seized with a ludicrous and uncontrollable panic. There was no time to effect an exchange, and an explanation of the

absurd transfer of costume seemed impossible. The open window suggested flight as the only possible means of evading a ridiculous and embarrassing situation, and through it he darted. Arthur made a feeble effort to follow him; but before he could circle round the long mahogany table the door was swung open by the landlady, and the Bishop and the young ladies came in.

The Bishop was a tall, powerfully built, well-preserved man of sixty, clean shaved, with a square chin, deep-set eyes, bushy brows, aquiline nose, and thin lips—a kindly but evidently austere man, just the kind of person to give any one who displeased him a very bad quarter of an hour.

'Yes,' he remarked, 'this is the room I spoke of. You will bring the tea as soon as possible, please.'

'Yes, my lord,' said the landlady deferentially, and disappeared.

Spectacles on nose, hat on head, with a clerical coat, vest, and collar, and a pair of white flannel pants, the unfortunate Arthur shrank into the shadiest corner of the room, and remained for the time being unrecognised by the girls. The Bishop sat down by the table, and his eye falling upon the scrap of newspaper which Jewson had left, he picked it up and began to read it, glancing suspiciously at Arthur, who sat palpitating in the corner with his hat on. At length he rose, and, moving to the window, looked out, casting sidelong glances at the unfortunate young man, his eyes lingering on the hat and the white flannel pants in a way that made Arthur blush to the roots of his hair. For a few moments there was an embarrassing silence. The laughter of happy youth and the musical splash of oars stole in through the open window.

'This is a charming neighbourhood,' said the Bishop at length, sitting down immediately opposite his victim and surveying him leisurely.

'Yes—yes—extremely so,' stammered Arthur, acutely conscious that the girls started and stared at the sound of his voice; 'plenty of nice walks and—and drives—and—then the river, you know—first-rate boating.'

The poor young man was reduced by agitation and embarrassment to a state verging on imbecility. Here was the opportunity he had been longing for, the opportunity of meeting his lordship and producing a favourable impression upon him, and he was despairingly conscious that his preposterous costume and incoherent speech were calculated to make the Bishop conclude that he was only a few degrees removed from a mild species of lunatic. His lordship eyed him curiously.

'Yes,' he remarked, with a severe glance at Arthur's white flannel pants, 'I should think the boating must be very enjoyable. You have a living here, I presume?'

'N—no. I can hardly aspire to that,' stammered Arthur.

'A curate, I suppose?'

'Well—well—not exactly.'

'Not exactly! Are you in holy orders?'

'Well—hardly.'

'Ah!' said the Bishop significantly.

'The fact is,' exclaimed Arthur desperately, 'that I am not a clergyman at all.'

The Bishop rose with a very severe expression.

'I am not surprised to hear it,' said he. 'I should have judged so from your appearance and manner. I can only hope that your reasons for assuming this dress will bear examination better than one is necessarily led to suppose.'

The Bishop being the one person in the world that Arthur was most anxious to propitiate, he made one last desperate effort to avert his displeasure.

'I—I am conscious, my lord,' said he, 'that—that my conduct must appear to you suspicious; but I assure you that my appearance in this dress is merely the result of a joke.'

The Bishop's eyebrows went up.

'A joke!'

'Yes; not a judicious but a perfectly harmless one. I came here to meet a friend—a clergyman. We are very old friends—and—and just for the fun of the thing, we—we changed clothes. He wanted to see what I should look

like—don't you see?—in his clothes, you understand?'

'And your friend—where is he?' asked his lordship dubiously.

'I—I don't know,' stammered Arthur. 'That is to say, he's gone—he went away.'

'So it appears,' said the Bishop dryly. 'I am acquainted with a great many clergymen. Will you oblige me with your friend's name?'

The name had almost escaped Arthur's lips, when behind the Bishop he caught a glimpse of Katie shaking her head vigorously with her finger to her lips. Then all that Ambrose had said about the Bishop's objection to his clergy appearing in laymen's clothes flashed across his mind, and he realised that to mention Frank's name might seriously interfere with his chances of preferment.

'No,' said he desperately, 'I can't do that. It would be breach of confidence.'

'Ah!' rejoined the Bishop in a very suggestive tone, and turned his back on him.

'I am going to write the note I spoke to you about, Miss Leslie,' he said to Katie as he moved towards the door. 'I shall be back in a few moments.'

As the door closed behind the Bishop, Arthur found himself confronted by the bewildered and indignant girls.

## ROMANTIC EDINBURGH.

**E**VERY true Scotsman, according to Alexander Smith, believes Edinburgh to be the most picturesque city in the world. After the roar of London, there is something almost village-like, clean, and orderly, 'secluded, almost quiescent,' in its streets. A gallant Frenchman, after a bird's-eye view of the town in 1896, went home and told the Parisians in a certain newspaper that it was worthy of comparison with Rome and Athens as a royal city, a national capital, and a literary and artistic centre, for which Nature had done more than art. This last statement no one will deny. The scolding administered to builders and architects by Mr Ruskin in his Philosophical Institution lectures in November 1853 has apparently made slight impression on these gentlemen or the public. Those who were responsible for laying out the New Town more than a hundred years ago had a very definite plan, which they followed out in stone and lime; since then, mainly within the past thirty or forty years, what R. L. Stevenson calls the 'infuriate zeal of builders' has created another Edinburgh in and around the suburbs, which more resembles chaos than cosmos as far as any general plan is concerned; but nothing that the hand of man has done or will do can destroy

the more picturesque features of the place, whether viewed from the heart of the city—the North Bridge or Calton Hill, from Arthur's Seat, Blackford, the Braids, Corstorphine Hill, or the slopes of the more distant Pentlands. It is still 'mine own romantic town' of Sir Walter Scott, whether seen from those points of vantage, at sunrise or

Still and fair

With mournfulness of sunset air;

or, as Alexander Smith saw it from Wardie:

High in heaven, wan,

Towered, templed, metropolitan,

Waited upon by hills,

River, and widespread ocean, tinged

By April light, or draped and fringed

As April vapour wills,

Thou hangest, like a Cyclop's dream,

High in the shifting weather-gleam.

Fair art thou when above thy head

The mistless firmament is spread;

But when the twilight screen

Draws glimmering round thy towers and spires,

And thy lone bridge, uncrowned by fires,

Hangs in the dim ravine,

Thou art a very Persian tale—

Oh, Mirza's vision! Bagdad's vale!

From a huddle of houses aspiring skyward,  
within the city walls and mainly built on the



great central ridge between the Castle and Holyrood, the town burst its boundaries more than a century ago, when the occupied area outside speedily grew greater than that inside the town proper. The population has multiplied itself by three since 1792, while the circumference of the city, which was then about seven miles, and sparsely peopled in the outskirts, before last extension was nine and two-third miles; now, with Portobello and many suburbs in the latest extension, it is nearer twenty-one miles.

Robert Chambers reminds us that the desire to beautify Edinburgh first displayed itself in a practical way during the provostship of George Drummond, who certainly deserved the best monument that the citizens could rear to him. Instead, he reared his own memorials—for the public good mainly—in the old North Bridge (1763), whereby old Edinburgh escaped northwards, and became a larger and new Edinburgh; in founding the Royal Exchange, the Royal Infirmary, and five professorships in the university. He was six times Lord Provost ere he was laid to rest in Canongate Churchyard; and a substantial foundation had then been made for an improved Edinburgh. Drummond Place, in the New Town, recalls the fact that his house of Drummond Lodge once stood there.

Scott, in looking eastwards along Princes Street, used to complain of the ugly mass of buildings clustered at each end of the North Bridge. That reproach is now removed: a new North Bridge spans the valley above the Waverley Station, and the buildings on the line of the main street are worthy of the reputation of Edinburgh. About half-a-million of money has been spent on the Waverley Station alone by the North British Railway Company; so that, if it is not the finest, it is at least the largest station in the United Kingdom, covering twenty-three acres of ground. Great railway hotels are rising at both the east and west end of Princes Street. The electric-light and cable-tramways have been successfully introduced. St Giles' Cathedral has been restored by William Chambers. Thanks to an American millionaire, Mr Andrew Carnegie, a handsome Free Public Library has been planted in George IV. Bridge. The spacious and ornate McEwan Hall at the New University Buildings is also due to private beneficence; so is the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Queen Street, the gift of John Ritchie Findlay of the *Scotsman*. As yet the hundred thousand pounds left by a wealthy distiller have not found a local investment and a name as the Usher Public Hall. The Braid Hills and Blackford and the Arboretum and Botanic Gardens are public parks that any town might envy, and which the inhabitants certainly use and enjoy; while the stranger introduced for the first time to some of the many golf-courses in the neighbourhood might conclude that a large section of the community were wholly

given over to the pastime of golf in their leisure hours.

This does not by any means exhaust the city improvements. William Chambers during his term of provostship inaugurated a city improvement scheme which opened up and widened streets in the overcrowded parts of the Old Town, and lessened the death-rate. This process has been continued in a modified way by his successors. There is a new National Observatory on the Blackford Hills. The Water of Leith purification scheme has rendered that stream innocuous to health. Improvements have been carried out in the municipal buildings at the Royal Exchange; but Edinburgh's City Chambers are far from being so extensive and imposing as the suite of civic buildings in Glasgow. New County Buildings are to be erected at the north-east corner of George IV. Bridge. The old slaughter-houses were found to be a nuisance and dangerous to health when situated at the Nor' Loch, and it is now suggested that the present slaughter-house in Fountain-bridge and the Cattle Market in Lauriston, where a new Fire Brigade Station has been erected, be removed outside the town radius. The Royal Infirmary of Lord Provost Drummond has, on another site, grown to the enormous piles between the Meadows and Lauriston; and about a quarter of a million is being spent upon a hospital for infectious diseases, the red stone pavilions of which are rising at Colinton Mains, to the south-west of Morningside. A new Asylum for the Insane crowns Craig House Hill, in the old mansion of which John Hill Burton wrote his *History of Scotland*. Nor has the water-supply been neglected. The first spring-water was brought from Comiston—a district then three and a half miles south-west of the town, but which has been largely compassed by the embracing arms of the city—to Edinburgh, in a leaden pipe of three-inch bore, in 1681. The size of pipe had to be increased in 1772, in 1787, and again in 1790, when Swanston springs were annexed. Specimens of early wooden water-pipes—merely hollowed tree-stems—may be seen in the Town Museum. Early in the century, in 1821, recourse was had to the Crawley springs at Glen-corse; and, later, further supplies were sought both north and south of the Pentlands. The Moorfoot scheme of 1870 was still deemed insufficient, and now the great Talla scheme is in progress, to bring into the city the waters of the moorland Talla, a tributary of the Tweed, about forty miles distant, which will be equal to a supply of eight million gallons a day for a population of two hundred and fifty-four thousand. The gasworks, too, will be removed from the Canongate district to the open space west of Granton; while the Suburban Branch of the North British Railway has eased the congestion of traffic at the Waverley Station. Save, therefore, for the natural features, and the High Street, Canongate, and Cowgate, it is a new Edinburgh we look upon to-day.

Mr Ruskin has complained of the monotony of the architecture of Queen Street, York Place, and Picardy Place, where he counted six hundred and seventy-eight windows each exactly after the same design. The decorations of Edinburgh were as monotonous to him as the 'simplicities.' He asked how many Corinthian and Doric columns were in the banks and public institutions exactly like the others. So much did he feel this monotony that, walking along George Street, he pictured the visitor longing for some opening north or south to let in the lustre of the Firth of Forth or the rugged outline of the Castle. 'Take away,' he says, 'the sea-waves and the dark basalt, and I fear you would find little to interest you in George Street itself.' The general character of Edinburgh buildings at the height of the eye he describes as 'nothing but square-cut stone—square-cut stone—a wilderness of square-cut stone for ever and for ever; so that your houses look like prisons, and truly are so.' At the same time, he alleges that, of all cities in the British Islands, Edinburgh is the one which presents most advantages for the display of a noble building and suffers most from the erection of a commonplace one. Although a seeming contradiction, he has further said that, 'as far as I am acquainted with modern architecture, I am aware of no streets which, in simplicity and manliness of style, or general breadth and brightness of effect, equal those of the New Town of Edinburgh.'

The inhabitant of Edinburgh may be all the better of knowing that a residence there 'is an education in itself. Its beauty refines one like being in love. What a poem is that Princes Street!' According to the same authority, the finest view from the interior is that obtained from the corner of St Andrew Street, looking west. Even finer is that from beside the Burns Monument, Calton Hill, looking towards the Castle. The best of all recent books on the town is *Romantic Edinburgh* (Sands & Co.), by John Geddie, of the *Scotsman*. Mr Geddie, who is a pleasant, well-informed guide to the present and past of Edinburgh, starts from the North Bridge and gives a picture of Old Edinburgh just as the town was beginning to expand northwards. He shows us the Nor' Loch, the High Street, the Castle Hill, Lawnmarket, Netherbow, Canon-gate, Holyrood, and conducts us round the old Flodden Wall, describing the New Town and suburbs, Leith, and Portobello. It is thoroughly interesting, well informed, well written, and exceedingly suggestive. One feels that with double the space at the author's command he could have more than doubled our pleasure and information. The pictures by Mr Patrick are very helpful to the letterpress. This is the best modern book on Edinburgh since R. L. Stevenson's *Picturesque Notes*, and is blessed with an excellent index.

A certain Charles R. Guy Hall, London, has mentioned that none of the Continental views he

has seen are 'in any way to be compared with the combined variety of seascape, landscape, and, if I may be permitted the expression, architectural-landscape which is to be witnessed in all its unrivalled grandeur from the altitude known as Arthur Seat.' Thomas Carlyle, when a student in Edinburgh, and later, was not entirely complimentary to the town and its people. For him the town was sometimes the 'dullest and the poorest and on the whole paltriest of places. I cannot remember that I have heard one sentence with true meaning in it uttered since I came here.' There is, however, a perfect gem of a description in one of his early letters to his brother John, written in 1821, which might gratify our London admirer of the view from Arthur's Seat. Scott's classical passage giving the view of Edinburgh from Blackford Hill is well known, as well as his fine reference to Salisbury Crags in the *Heart of Midlothian*; so is that chapter of R. L. Stevenson's describing the view from Swanston; but this early effort of the greatest word-painter of the century is not quite current coin: 'Arthur's Seat, a mountain close beside me, where the atmosphere is pure as a diamond, and the prospect grander than any you ever saw. The blue, majestic, everlasting ocean, with the Fife hills swelling gradually into the Grampians behind it on the north; rough crags and rude precipices at our feet ("where not a hillock rears its head unsung"), with Edinburgh at their base, clustering proudly over her rugged foundations, and covering with a vapoury mantle the jagged, black, venerable masses of stonework that stretch far and wide and show like a city of fairyland. There's for you, man! I saw it all last evening, when the sun was going down, and the moon's fine crescent (like a pretty silver creature as it is) was riding quietly above me. Such a sight does one good.' Even while Carlyle was writing this we are reminded of an old Edinburgh custom: he heard the watchman chant 'Ha-alf-pa-ast twelve' (A.M.). Professor Syme, in driving young John Brown (Rab) over the west shoulder of Corstorphine Hill, said, 'John, we'll do one thing at a time, and there will be no talk.' John recalled the view thirty years afterwards. A garrulous companion is out of place in such expeditions.

Very notable, too, is Carlyle's attempt to reconstruct the Edinburgh of James I. and Charles I. in his posthumous fragment in *Historical Sketches*. R. L. Stevenson generally comes off with flying colours when fancy and imagination wander back from his island home to Edinburgh, as in the view from the slopes of Caerketton, above Swanston:

The tropics vanish, and meseems that I  
On steep Caerketton dreaming gaze again;  
Far set in fields and woods the town I see  
Spring gallant, from the shadows of her smoke,  
Beflagged, spired, and turreted, her virgin fort cragg'd.

In the Swanston chapter in *Picturesque Notes*, Stevenson gives the same view, one of the best

round Edinburgh, with great truth and beauty of language. In his *Memories and Portraits*, two chapters refer to Swanston and Swanston characters, and one to the old manse at Colinton and its inmates.

To get the full romance of Edinburgh it is advisable that the visitor or native look as far as possible at everything with his or her own eyes, and not be too much the slave of the guide or guide-book. It gives joy and zest to discover the new routes and matters worthy of notice for one's self. In fact, the ready-made tourist-route is a snare to every leisurely-going, unconventional traveller who wishes to see Edinburgh or the Highlands for himself. There are routes and views and scenes off the beaten track quite as worthy as those signalled by Scott or other writers. Yet Edinburgh might well have erected, at her own expense, the handsome Gothic monument in Princes Street to Scott, which Professor Masson has pronounced the finest ever erected to a man of letters, from the design by the self-taught architect, G. M. Kemp; for, as Alexander Smith puts it, Scott discovered the city was beautiful, sang its praises to the world, 'and he has put more coin into the pockets of its inhabitants than if he had established a branch of manufacture of which they had the monopoly.' Robert Chambers, in the early freshness of his powers, added to his own fame and that of Edinburgh by embalming the records and memorials, the appearance of streets and closes, many of which are now a thing of the past, in his extremely readable and interesting *Traditions of Edinburgh*. It is well that we have such a picture of the town in this and in his *Walks in Edinburgh* ere the expansion and improvement had blotted many of the old landmarks out of existence. Lord Cockburn's *Memorials* is so well read even yet that seldom does it remain a day on the shelves of any town library.

For the light and shade of character, anecdotes and characteristics of old worthies, commend us to the biographers, even the novelist and essayist: Defoe even, Smollett, Carlyle of Inveresk, Scott, and Dr John Brown in *Hours Subsecivæ*. J. G. Lockhart's *Peter's Letters to his Kinsfolk* photographs, as it were in clear and sharp outline, the literary, legal, and political luminaries of the first quarter of the century. A later work, *Edinburgh Dissected*, on the same plan, is interesting, although without a like ability or alertness of mind. If any one wishes to be set up in phrases about Edinburgh for a lifetime, let him turn to *Edinburgh Picturesque Notes* by R. L. Stevenson, which is a whimsical yet clever and entertaining book. Never was sentence more true than in his case when he says that 'the place establishes an interest in people's hearts.' Of this he was a notable example. He sighs in one of his letters: 'Oh for ten Edinburgh minutes, sixpence between us, and the ever-glorious Lothian Road, or dear mysterious

Leith Walk!' But Stevenson tells us frankly that it has the vilest climate under heaven, and of the changes that have passed over the Old Town houses remarks: 'The cobbler succeeded the earl; the beggar ensconced himself by the Judge's chimney; what had been a palace was and is a pauper refuge, and great mansions were so parcelled out among the least and lowest in society.' There are two good chapters on Edinburgh in Alexander Smith's *Summer in Skye*, and it is to be regretted that this author did not live to complete that fragment of a poem on the town printed in *Last Leaves*, which was to be the complement of that very fine one on Glasgow.

The romantic side of the Edinburgh of the '45 is found in *Waverley*; the prose side may be seen in Carlyle of Inveresk's autobiography. As a budding divine, 'Jupiter' Carlyle helped to defend the city, and gives a graphic picture of the ineptitude of the defence. How the books accumulate! *Kay's Portraits*, Professor Masson's *Edinburgh Sketches and Memories*, Daniel Wilson's *Memorials of Edinburgh*, Mrs Oliphant's *Royal Edinburgh*, Wilmot Harrison's *Memorable Edinburgh Houses*, Dunlop's *Book of Old Edinburgh*, John Reid's *New Lights on Old Edinburgh* (which is specially good for the High Street), Katherine Lockie's *Picturesque Edinburgh*, and, for the suburbs, Margaret Warrender's *Walks Round Edinburgh*.

The literature of bookselling, printing, and publishing belongs to and is closely identified with modern Edinburgh. It is a fascinating page of history which should not be missed. Some of the more important books in this department, besides *Peter's Letters* already mentioned, are the *Memoirs of Scott*, Hogg, De Quincey, Lockhart, Christopher North, Patrick Fraser Tytler, with William Creech's *Fugitive Pieces*, Archibald Constable and his *Literary Correspondents*, *Memoir of William and Robert Chambers*, *Memoirs of Adam Black*, and *The House of Blackwood*. There is also, we believe, a privately-printed *Memoir of William Nelson* by his friend Sir Daniel Wilson. The Town Museum, which has just been rehoused and rearranged, under the supervision of Mr J. G. Ferguson, is rich in relics and pictures of Old Edinburgh from which it might be possible to reconstruct the Edinburgh of a past generation. A selection of these pictures has been privately issued, entitled *Bits of Old Edinburgh*, under the auspices of the Town Council, with descriptive letterpress by John Reid.

For the past and present geological history of Edinburgh, always a fascinating study, Mr J. G. Goodchild, of the Geological Survey, is a well-informed living guide, and as part of his professional duty has kept a record of the strata exposed during all excavations. He saw his opportunity at the new North Bridge, and wrote two articles for the *Scotsman* on the 'Ground Below the Scotsman Office.' He has also written articles on Blackford Hill and its amethysts and carnelians, and on the Braid Burn. A section lately



exposed at Forrest Road has been of value in confirming known facts. Hugh Miller's vigorous and vivid *Edinburgh and its Neighbourhood* and some of Sir Archibald Geikie's geological sketches rise to mind in this connection; but the literature of Edinburgh is so rich in all departments that we need not say more; every reader will be able to supply lists from personal experience.

Some tourists who come to the town see the sights, and drive to the Forth Bridge and Roslin, and feel that they have done their duty; but there are charming nooks and corners of suburban Edinburgh out of the beaten track which it is a great joy to discover and explore for one's self. It was in this way that Robert Chambers and R. L. Stevenson loved to discover them, wandering alone or with friends. To the very last Scott saw new beauties in 'mine own romantic town,' and late in life chronicled this impression of a drive between Lasswade and Edinburgh: 'I think I never saw anything more beautiful than the ridge of Carnethy against a clear frosty sky, with its peaks and varied slopes. The hills glowed like purple amethysts, the sky showed topaz and vermilion colours. I never saw a finer series than Pentland, considering it is neither rocky nor highly elevated.'

That is a well-spent day, or half a day, occupied in visiting Bonaly, the country residence which Lord Cockburn erected for himself near Colinton. Professor Blackie burst forth into verse on Bonaly Burn, which bickers down from the heath-clad moor above, and winds through the Bonaly grounds. Lord Jeffrey's *Life*, by his friend Lord Cockburn, is another good Edinburgh work. In its pages the reader is transported to the fine suburban retreat of Craigerook, on the north shoulder of Corstorphine Hill, which was the home for a time of the editor of the *Edinburgh Review*.

The dearest burn in all the world to Stevenson was that little stream which emerges from the heart of the Pentlands and flows past Glencorse Church to join the Esk. Some of the scenery here forms a background to *Weir of Hermiston*. Woodhouselee has a ghost, 'Lady Anne,' the circumstantial description of whose 'flowered [flowered] gown' used to set Scott off in roars of laughter during his visits to Woodhouselee while residing at Lasswade. Burgon's *Memoir of Patrick Fraser Tytler* shows how the historian revelled in this beautiful nook at Woodhouselee. The whole North Esk is redolent with memories of dead and living celebrities, from near its rise, where, at Newhall, Allan Ramsay's 'Habbie's Howe' is situated. In Penicuik is the home of S. R. Crockett the novelist. De Quincey resided for about fifteen years in a cottage known as Mavis Bush, Polton; then there is Hawthornden, with memories of Drummond; Lasswade, where Scott first set up his household gods after marriage; and lower down, on the way to Eskbank, Mrs Oliphant records that there she first awoke to

consciousness of things around her. Dalkeith has associations with General Monk, the Buccleuch family, and Norman Macleod. Musselburgh has memories of David Macbeth Moir, poet, and author of *Mansie Wauch*.

Yet, after all, there are times when a ramble in Lord Rosebery's fine grounds of Dalmeny and along the seashore at Cramond or in Lord Hopetoun's woods at Hopetoun House will be found to be a pleasure of no ordinary kind; and of such pleasures there are abundance in and around 'mine own romantic town.'

#### 'THIS OUGHT YE TO HAVE DONE.'

'That's a pathetic story of the fishing-boat crew of Gourdon, Kincardineshire. No class of men face death oftener than the hardy fisher-tollers of the sea, and among none is a genuine heroism oftener displayed. The Gourdon boat was manned by a father and his four sons. When the boat sank, three of the latter went with her. The old man got an oar, and soon the fourth son appeared by his side. But the oar could only support one; and the lad, taking in the situation at once, bade his parent farewell in the words, "Weel, weel, faither, I mair jist awa'," and sank. Only readers familiar with the northern dialect will fully appreciate the depth of kindly resignation and true feeling which the words denote. The father endured terrible sufferings, but was ultimately picked up. "Greater love hath no man than this."—*Daily Paper*.

We filled the leisure of the days,  
When from the north the wintry rain  
Was driv'n against the window pane,  
With tales that told our soldiers' praise.

And e'en the widowed heart seemed glad,  
As when the sun breaks through the cloud,  
To hear the neighbours speak aloud  
The praises of her soldier lad.

But where the circle of the sky  
Meets everywhere the angry wave,  
What praise is given to the brave  
When only God has seen them die?

The lad who, with the sea at strife,  
Let go his hold on life and youth  
To keep a faster hold on truth,  
And save, perchance, a father's life,

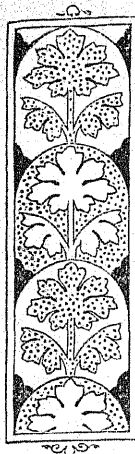
Was soon forgotten by the few  
Who chanced to read the scanty note  
Which told the sinking of the boat,  
And all the correspondent knew.

Not e'en a grave beneath the sod  
Will help to keep his memory green;  
And all the praise which might have been,  
We leave to be bestowed by God.

Oh! praise the soldier's honest faith  
Which keeps him brave 'midst shot and shell:  
They earn their decorations well  
Who face disablement and death.

But spare a kindly thought for one—  
That Scottish fisher-lad—who gave  
His own another's life to save,  
For braver deed was never done.

C. J. BODEN.



# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### SOME FORECASTS OF SCIENCE.

**A**N article recently appeared in the *Century Magazine* which is sure to attract the attention of all thoughtful men. It is from the pen of the great Slavonic-American electrician, Nikola Tesla, and its title is 'The Problem of Increasing Human Energy, with special reference to the Harnessing of the Sun's Energy.' In many respects this remarkable paper may be regarded as a sermon, and a very good sermon, from a lay preacher of unusually high attainments. He takes for his text the well-known line, *Mens sana in corpore sano*, and strives to show how wrong-doing of every kind is like a canker at the heart of mankind, keeping a constant check on human progress. He deplors the awful waste of life due to war, to famine, and to disease, and shows how these evils must reduce the sum of human energy. Despite its rather ponderous title, the article is one which will appeal to nearly all classes of readers, for it deals with a variety of interests; and it is in the hope that we may increase the number of those who will give it appreciative attention that we now devote a few remarks to its more salient features.

M. Tesla regards this busy world as an immense clockwork driven by a spring, the energy for actuating which emanates from one single source—the sun. The problem, therefore, of increasing human energy will be solved if man can learn to utilise more of the sun's energy; and he proceeds to examine the various means by which this will probably be achieved in the future. At the same time, he details the causes which tend to diminish human energy, and in so doing is led into many bypaths which afford him opportunity for interesting comment. Thus, speaking of the evils wrought by intemperance, he groups together whisky, wine, tea, coffee, and tobacco as being responsible for shortening the lives of many, and pleads for moderation in their use, not abstinence. He believes that the good people who are so energetic in forcing their

total abstinence views upon their fellow-mortals could make themselves far more useful by turning their efforts towards providing pure water, because 'for every person who perishes from the effect of a stimulant, at least a thousand die from the consequences of drinking impure water.' Little is being done to eliminate the germs of disease from public water-supplies, and no satisfactory method of sterilising great quantities of water has yet been adopted. M. Tesla believes that electrically produced ozone will in future solve this important problem.

About the terrible evil of organised warfare M. Tesla has also much to say, but he does not give much hope of the early coming of that day when men shall 'beat their swords into ploughshares.' Some have contended that the advent of the flying-machine must bring about a universal peace; but this he believes to be an erroneous view. 'The flying-machine is coming, and very soon; but the conditions will remain the same as before. In fact, I see no reason why a ruling power, like Great Britain, might not govern the air as well as the sea. Without wishing to put myself on record as a prophet, I do not hesitate to say that the next two years will see the establishment of an "air-power," and its centre may not be far from New York; but, for all that, men will fight on merrily.' Our author then proceeds to trace the evolution of the weapons of war, from the sling and stone, the bow and arrow, to the modern arm of precision. 'What,' he asks, 'is the next phase in this evolution?' He believes that the killing apparatus of the future will be one of specifically great power, but requiring only a few individuals to operate it. The loss of life will become smaller and smaller until eventually 'mere machines will meet in a contest without bloodshed, the nations being simply interested, ambitious spectators.'

The author's remarks respecting the possibility of increasing the world's food-supply are also of the greatest interest. One of the most important

constituents of the soil is nitric acid; and for many years agricultural chemists have been looking for some means by which the ordinarily inert nitrogen of the atmosphere might be assimilated as a plant-food. In the case of certain leguminous crops, the problem is solved by the action of bacteria; but M. Tesla holds out a promise that the change can be brought about by electricity. He plainly states that it is 'practicable to oxidise the atmospheric nitrogen in unlimited quantities, merely by the use of cheap mechanical power and simple electrical apparatus. In this manner many compounds of nitrogen may be manufactured all over the world, at a small cost, and in any desired amount; and, by means of these compounds, the soil can be fertilised and its productiveness indefinitely increased. . . . Soon, I hope, the world will see the beginning of an industry which, in time to come, will, I believe, be in importance next to iron.'

The prolific inventor has another grand scheme in his brain with regard to iron manufacture, a metal which he describes as being 'by far the most important factor in modern progress.' He speaks of the appalling waste of fuel—that is, energy—with which the manufacture of iron is at present carried on, and suggests its economical production by a new process. Dynamos are to be set in motion by the energy of a waterfall, and the current thus produced is, as a preliminary step, employed for decomposing water into its constituent gases—hydrogen and oxygen. The hydrogen would form fuel for smelting the iron ore, and the oxygen would be reserved for other industrial purposes; or it could be employed to burn all kinds of refuse, cheap hydrocarbon, or coal of inferior quality; the heat thus obtained being also used for smelting the metal. Heat-saving devices would be employed; and with the improvements thus foreshadowed, Tesla calculates that 'probably forty thousand pounds of iron could be produced per horse-power per annum by this method.'

With regard to the metal itself, the advances made in its manufacture have of late years been so great that we have arrived virtually at the limit of improvement. M. Tesla believes that, in the near future, iron will, in many of its now uncontested domains, give place to aluminium. This comparatively new metal—it was discovered only seventy years ago—has quickly come down from the price of gold to that of copper, and our author believes that, by a new method of manufacture which he foreshadows, it will become very much cheaper. A further reduction in the price of aluminium will annihilate the copper industry, and after that aluminium will begin to compete seriously with iron. At present iron holds its own in the construction of electrical apparatus because of its magnetism, in which respect it is unique among the metals; and unless a radical change is made in the method by which electric

currents are produced, iron will be indispensable. But M. Tesla has already produced 'electric transformers in which no iron is employed, and which are capable of performing ten times as much work per pound of weight as those of iron.' He owns that many seemingly insuperable difficulties—which, however, will probably be overcome in the end—are still in the way of the universal employment of aluminium for electrical purposes. In the meantime, aluminium will take the place of iron in many other industries—such as shipbuilding, or wherever lightness of construction is required. He believes it will revolutionise naval construction, and do much to hasten the coming of the flying-machine.

A great many suggestions in this interesting paper are certainly chimerical; and we fancy that M. Tesla would be inclined to admit that this is the case. Indeed, in many instances he raises a hope of a certain difficulty being overcome, or a new source of energy utilised, only to show in a succeeding paragraph how impracticable the thing is. Thus, after pointing out the limitations of wind-power, he asserts that 'a far better way, however, to obtain power would be to avail ourselves of the sun's rays, which beat the earth incessantly, and supply energy at a maximum rate of over four million horse-power per square mile;' but he presently admits that study of the matter convinced him 'that the solar engine, a few instances excepted, could not be industrially exploited with success.' Again, with regard to electricity produced by natural causes, he points out that 'lightning discharges involve great amounts of electrical energy, which we could utilise by transforming and storing it;' but he immediately afterwards acknowledges that 'the storing of the energy of lightning discharges will be difficult to accomplish.'

It is interesting to note that M. Tesla puts little faith in the bold anticipations which have been raised in America as to the future of liquid air. 'Much was expected of it in the beginning; but so far it has been an industrial *ignis fatuus*.' He is perfecting apparatus by which its cost will be greatly reduced; but he has evidently little faith in its adaptability for commercial needs. Used as a refrigerant, it is uneconomical, for its temperature is needlessly low; this same lowness of temperature condemns it to a small efficiency as an explosive; and for motive-power purposes its cost is far too high, even were its production as simple as the generation of steam.

Experiments with currents of high frequency have led M. Tesla to devise an ideal system of illumination by means of vacuum tubes, dispensing with incandescent lamps and films, and possibly with the use of wires. 'In this direction,' he says, 'I have met with gratifying success of late; and the practical introduction of this new system of illumination is not far off.' Here we have the definite promise of a boon which comes from a



domain of electrical science which M. Tesla has made his own. He is the first authority on the subject.

Far more startling results, however, than the lighting of lamps without communicating wires are anticipated by M. Tesla from the use of his high-frequency electrical currents. He has conceived the idea of constructing an automaton which shall act like an intelligent being. This wonderful invention was evolved from his active brain; 'and so,' he tells us, 'a new art came into existence, for which the name "telautomatics" has been suggested;' and by way of illustration he publishes a photograph of his first practical 'tel-automaton.' It is in the shape of a boat, with propeller and rudder, and contains its own motive-power; but it is controlled, without wires, 'by transmitting from a distance electrical oscillations to a circuit carried by the boat, and adjusted to respond only to these oscillations.' Such an automaton may be said to borrow its mind from the distant operator, who directs it what to do; but the inventor is not satisfied with this. He has projected another automaton, 'which will have its "own mind;" and by this I mean that it will be able— independent of any operator, and left entirely to itself—to perform, in response to external influences affecting its sensitive organs, a great variety of acts and operations as if it had intelligence. It will be able to follow a course laid out, or to obey orders given far in advance; it will be capable of distinguishing between what it ought and what it ought not to do, and of making experiences—or, otherwise stated, of recording impressions—which will definitely affect its subsequent actions. In fact, I have already conceived such a plan.'

We have carefully quoted M. Tesla's own words in connection with this startling announcement, which, if it be realised, will revolutionise industry. If the manufacturer can obtain such automata to do his bidding, to obey him implicitly, and to act conscientiously, as the description seems to imply, he will certainly prefer such servants to those of flesh and blood. The much-worried mistresses of many households will also look forward to the commercial introduction of M. Tesla's automatic 'slavey.'

Not only does M. Tesla arouse our surprise at his prognostications, but he almost takes our breath away by their magnificent daring. He speaks of the development of a new principle, the production of powerful electrical oscillations, efficient apparatus for the production of which he recognised as the key to the solution of other most important electrical and, in fact, human problems. He succeeded in evolving a transformer or induction-coil on new principles, which he calls the electrical oscillator, and photographs showing the stupendous experimental effects obtained by this apparatus illustrate his words. These weird manifestations of electrical force, measuring, we are told, from

sixty to seventy feet across, give one the impression that M. Tesla has harnessed the lightning and can make it do his bidding; but he tells us that these extraordinary results are trifling compared with those attainable by apparatus designed on the same principle. 'I have produced electrical movements occurring at the rate of approximately one hundred thousand horse-power; but rates of one, five, or ten million horse-power are easily practicable. In these experiments effects were developed incomparably greater than any ever produced by human agencies, and yet these results are but an embryo of what is to be.' By help of these developments we shall be able to produce at will an electrical effect upon any portion of the globe, to determine the relative position and course of a distant ship at sea; and, in a time not very distant, submarine cables will become obsolete. More than this, the electrical movements produced and capable of direction will be of such magnitude that they will be perceptible on some of our nearer neighbours in space, as Venus and Mars. 'That we can send a message to a planet is certain; that we can get an answer is probable. Man is not the only being in the Infinite gifted with a mind.'

Now we approach the conclusion of this extraordinary forecast of the possibilities in store for future generations of men. In the course of his investigations M. Tesla has noted that the air, instead of acting as a non-conductor, as it does to ordinary electric currents, gives to these impulses of excessive electromotive force a perfect conducting path better even than copper wire. The energy of thousands of horse-power can be transmitted in this way for thousands of miles, and the system will be both economical and safe. When these anticipations are realised, the countries which are fortunate enough to be rich in waterfalls will find that the export of power will be their chief source of revenue. The United States, Canada, Central and South America, Switzerland, and Sweden will quickly grow rich, and men in all parts of the world will be able to irrigate the soil without difficulty. There will be no more famines in India or elsewhere, and 'the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.'

It is anticipated by M. Tesla that many will consider these results still far from practical application, although they appear to him simple and obvious; and he does not expect that his advanced ideas will be readily taken up. In this respect we think that the author is mistaken in his forecast, for there are now in every country many earnest men who are devoting their lives to the study of electricity; and we may be sure that M. Tesla will secure among them many disciples who will do their best to test his theories. To such men it will be left to decide whether the promise of so many good things has a sound scientific basis, or is only of 'such stuff as dreams are made.'

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

CHAPTER XIII.—WHAT VAUREL SAW.



HE murder of Captain Zuyler, and the thought of the madman still at large, had a depressing influence on us all, and the people of the village would not stir out of doors after nightfall upon any consideration whatever. I wished much that mademoiselle could be got away, for the events of the last few days began to tell on her; and yet her society was so very sweet to me that I was loath to suggest any change which must inevitably remove her from such protection as I could offer. But my ideas were suddenly crystallised into action.

I was loitering solitarily on the terrace, on the afternoon of the day on which Colonel Lepard left, when Vaurel came along with the rods and intimated that it was a good day for fishing.

I saw by his face that he had something to say to me, and we set off up the river, past his house, in the direction of Bency; for Juliot and a party of gendarmes from Rennes were ransacking the woods in the other direction in vain search for Roussel.

Vaurel spoke little till we came to his own house. Boulot was inside; but he knew his master's step, and only snuffled at us under the door; and when Vaurel pulled the key out of his pocket and opened it he reared himself up against me and gave me hearty welcome.

I stopped in surprise at seeing my old bed occupied, and was more surprised still when I saw that it was Roussel who was lying there, worn and wasted, and whether dead or asleep I could not tell.

I looked at Vaurel and asked, 'What is the meaning of this?'

Vaurel explained that he found Roussel like that in the wood the morning after the storm, and carried him there. 'It was Colonel Lepard who killed Captain Zuyler; not Roussel at all. I saw it all,' said Vaurel, 'and it seems to me, monsieur, that if we work this matter right we may find the key to unlock Monsieur Gaston's prison and set him free, and restore him whole to mademoiselle, unless he dies in the meantime.'

'Tell me all you know, Vaurel.'

'I had been searching for days past for him, as you know'—nodding towards the bed. 'It seemed to me likely that he used the old mill as a retreat; and so that he should not see me I climbed a tree from which I could keep watch on the mill. That afternoon of the storm Colonel Lepard and the Captain came along the path. The rain was just coming on, and they stopped for shelter under the tree I was on. There was hot dispute going on between them, and this is what they said, as nearly as I can remember it:

The Captain broke out, "I tell you I will wait no longer. I have waited, waited, waited till my credit is broken. I must have money, and at once." And the Colonel replied sulkily, "Well, I haven't got any." "Then," said the other, "I have made up my mind to sell my wares elsewhere." "What do you mean by that?" asked the Colonel angrily. "Just exactly what I say, my friend," said the Captain. "There is a market to my hand here, and the payment will be liberal." "You mean mademoiselle?" asked the Colonel. "Of course," said the Captain; "whom else should I mean? Mademoiselle would give half her fortune to learn some things I could tell her." "Zuyler, you are a dirty scoundrel!" exclaimed the Colonel. "There is not much to choose between us, my Colonel," said the Captain.

"Then the thunder came on, and the lightning began to play among the trees, and I was not very happy. Those below didn't like it either; and Colonel Lepard ran through the rain to the old mill, and the other followed. When the storm cleared for a bit I saw them looking out of the doorway, and then of a sudden the Captain went down like a struck ox, and it was Colonel Lepard who struck him from behind with an iron bar, and struck him again and again as he lay on the ground. The Colonel stood looking at him for a time; then he threw down his *képi*, swung the bar between his legs, and brought it down on his own bare head, swearing horribly at the pain he gave himself. He afterwards dabbed some of the other's blood over his own head and face, and started off for home. It all paralysed me; and when I came down at last and went to see if any life was left in the Captain, Juliot came along from Bessancy way and found me, and thought I'd done it. Perhaps he had reason. But it all happened just as I have told you, monsieur.'

'It's a terrible story, Vaurel.'

'And every word of it is true, monsieur. And now,' he said, 'we have Colonel Lepard in the hollow of our hands, and if we can't wring the truth out of him about young Gaston we're a pair of fools.'

'I believe every word you have told me, Vaurel; but you'll never get the world to believe it. Lepard simply stated that it was the madman who attacked them with an iron rod, just as he had attacked mademoiselle and myself a few days before.'

'Exactly! It was that put him up to it. Well, monsieur, here is my proof of his lying; and if a man lies in such a case it is for an object. Old Père Goliot had to fetch a parcel from the station for the farm on that day, and

he and Louis Vard walked up together in the rain. Just after they crossed the bridge he'—nodding at Roussel on the bed—'broke out from the bushes, crossed the road, and went down towards the river. They were for going after him; but as they heard the train coming up they hurried to the station. You know what time the train from Redon arrives. It was, therefore, exactly three o'clock; and a few minutes later Colonel Lepard says this same Roussel attacked him and the Captain at the old mill of Bessancy, which is four miles away. *Voilà!*'

I nodded. 'That works out all right. But have Louis Vard and old Goliot said nothing of all this to any one else?'

'I went up to Mère Thibaud's last night to wash the taste of that poor devil of a captain out of my mouth. Père Goliot was there, and they were all talking of the murder and chaffing the old man because he said he had seen the madman up near the station that same afternoon, when by rights he must have been down at the old mill murdering people. The old chap went sulky, and would say nothing but "Very well, very well; ask Louis Vard." I knew if Louis Vard saw him it was just the card I wanted, and I had a drink and slipped out quietly to meet him as he came from the station. I asked him if it was true that he and Père Goliot had seen Roussel at three o'clock, and he said it was; and I asked him to keep it to himself till I wanted him to tell it. I told him as shortly as I could why I wished it; and he understood and promised. Then he went in, and I followed him soon after, greeting him as if we had not seen one another a few minutes before. Poor old Goliot was weeping with his head on the table. He had appealed to Louis as soon as he came in, but Louis only laughed at him and said he must have had too much cider; and the old fellow couldn't stand it, and cried like a baby. It couldn't be helped; and when the rest had gone I tackled him while Louis was busy with Jeanne. He stuck to his story, and I wrote it all down in my pocket-book where I mark down my pigeons and my fish, and asked him to sign it, which he did, saying, "And it is all true, Monsieur Vaurel—every word of it." I told him if he took my advice he would say no more about it to any one, or he might get into trouble; and then I gave him five francs, and he went home quite happy. Louis Vard wrote out his statement on the next page. Here it is, and here is Père Goliot's. That little book, monsieur, holds enough to drop Monsieur Lepard's ugly head into the basket. Is it not so?'

'I believe it is, Vaurel, and it was cleverly done on your part. Now, how do you suggest making use of it?'

'Ah! there I don't see my way so clearly. That is what I want to talk to you about. You can guess why Colonel Lepard has gone to Paris?'

'To bury his—friend and explain matters, I suppose.'

'And to secure his papers, without doubt. Now, the first thing is to get Monsieur le Colonel back here without a moment's delay, and the next is to get mademoiselle away before he comes.'

'Why?'

'We may have strange doings when the Colonel comes, monsieur, and mademoiselle will be better out of them. If we once get hold of him we shall not let him go until he tells all he knows.'

There seemed to me possibilities in the scheme, though Lepard did not strike me as a particularly likely subject for coercion. Still, there was no knowing. Men of that mould sometimes go to pieces more readily than quieter and less blustering ones. Anyhow, if the scheme offered the slightest prospect of success it was worth trying.

Vaurel's idea was that mademoiselle might be led to fall in with Madame Mère's proposal, and return with her to Combourg to the Convent of the Sacred Heart, of which she was the lady superior. She might do so if it was explained that this was for the sake of Monsieur Gaston; so we sat and planned, and planned again, until it became quite dark.

When at length we had got our ideas into definite shape I returned to the Château and begged Hortense to obtain me an interview with mademoiselle as soon as possible. She returned immediately, and asking me to follow her, led me to the door of mademoiselle's own room.

She met me with an eager questioning in her face.

'You have news for me?' she asked.

'I have very grave news, and a great many plans,' I said. Then I laid the whole matter before her, just as Vaurel and I had discussed it, and told her what we wanted to do. She listened with keen attention, nodding her pretty head now and again to hurry me on, and seeing the end of a sentence before I had barely started it. She was shocked and horrified at the information about Captain Zuyler's murder, but did not question it.

She did not take very kindly to the convent idea, and this somehow gave me pleasure; but she had no better suggestion to offer.

'Madame Mère will be very unwilling to let me go if once she has me at Combourg,' she said, shaking her head doubtfully. 'She is made of marble, and has no more heart than a statue. Why can I not stop here?'

I explained that we could not tell what might happen if she did so. According to Vaurel, there would be little difficulty in her getting away when she wanted to go; and on my promising to bring her any news, as she would be sure to be lonely and anxious, she became more reconciled to the idea.

'I hope to be the bearer of good news, for we have the Colonel in a cleft stick, and we won't let him out till he tells us all he knows.'



She nodded. 'How are you going to get him here? You have not told me that yet.'

'I want to send him a telegram in your name, mademoiselle, something like this: "Return immediately," or "Please come quickly—I am in danger."'

She pursed her lips and wrinkled her brow as she thought it over. The idea was evidently distasteful. Then she got a piece of paper and a pencil, and tried the message in various forms; but, judging from her face, she liked the look of none of them. At last, however, she handed me the message in its final shape: 'Come quickly; I want your assistance.'

'Now, when can you be ready to leave here, mademoiselle? The Colonel will be back to-morrow night most likely. Perhaps you will also arrange for Hortense and her mother to go home. We shall want the place to ourselves.'

'Then we must go in the afternoon. I will tell Madame Mère at once and prepare her; and I will arrange about Hortense and her mother. Perhaps you will give some explanation to Monsieur Dieufoy.'

I found Hortense and sent her to ask M. Dieufoy if I could speak with him, and he came down immediately to the *salon*.

'Monsieur l'Abbé,' I said in English, 'I have just come from mademoiselle. I have been urging her to leave this place at once. I do not think it right that she should remain here under present circumstances. Am I not correct?'

He took a pinch of snuff and gazed at me with his head on one side in his inquisitive, bird-like way. He took another pinch of snuff while he arranged his answer in English, and then said, 'I think that is a very wise decision, Monsieur Lamont. What does mademoiselle say?'

'She does not wish to go; but I think I have succeeded in persuading her to it.'

'And where does mademoiselle wish to go?' he asked cautiously.

'Well, I thought perhaps it could be arranged that Madame de St Ouen should take charge of her for a time. Do you think she would be willing to do so?'

'She might,' he said, and took another very deliberate pinch, marvelling much, I could see, at the way Providence was playing into his hands. 'I will speak to madame on the subject. When would mademoiselle think of going?'

'The sooner the better, Monsieur l'Abbé. Candidly,' I said, dropping into a confidential tone, 'I do not consider it safe here with that madman wandering about. There is no knowing what might happen next.'

He nodded. 'I quite agree with you, monsieur. It gives one a feeling of discomfort when he may jump out on you from every bush and any corner. Mademoiselle will be better away; and, *ma foi*! for myself I shall not be sorry to go also.'

What M. Dieufoy thought my real motives were

I cannot say. His face was ever a closed book, though not so tightly sealed as madame's; but I do not think he believed them to be so transparently simple as they seemed. More than once during dinner I felt his eyes fixed inquiringly upon me, as though he would like to look inside and get at actual facts.

As soon as dinner was over I excused myself and slipped off quietly to Vaurel's house, where he was expecting me. A few minutes later he was on his way to the station, where he caught the last train to Rennes, his mission being to send mademoiselle's telegram to the Colonel from the office there. I remained with Boulot in charge of Roussel.

That was a weary vigil, for Master Boulot jumped heavily on to his master's bed the moment Vaurel's back was turned, and curled himself round and went to sleep, leaving me to watch by the sick man or to follow his example as I chose.

However, the night passed between dozing and waking, ministering as well as I was able to the necessities of Roussel, and marvelling somewhat at the strange broad streak in Vaurel's nature which had led him to assume the burden of this flickering life.

Vaurel returned by the early morning train. We discussed some further details of our plans; and then I went back to the Château, where preparations for departure were being hurriedly completed.

When we met at breakfast, which partook somewhat of the nature of a pilgrims' feast—for we were all in our travelling apparel, and had not much time to spare—M. Dieufoy asked me pointedly as to my own plans. I told him that I travelled with them as far as Rennes, where I might stay for a short time, and after that I had made no arrangements.

Our journey to Rennes gave me no opportunity for further conversation with mademoiselle, who sat looking out of the window much as I had seen her that first day we met. There we parted, for M. Dieufoy was to accompany the ladies to Combours.

There was—or so it seemed to me—a look of wistful regret in mademoiselle's eyes as she raised them to mine in saying good-bye; and she said, 'You will not forget to let me know?'

'I shall forget nothing, mademoiselle,' I said, and—well, perhaps my eyes said more than my words, for once more it seemed to me that something in her glance responded to the feeling that was in me.

Madame de St Ouen bade me farewell with a bow of impassive frigidity; but though her face was, as it always was, like that of a marble statue, it conveyed to me, in some occult fashion, a sense of exultation on her part; and I looked at her again to see where it showed, but could not discover it, though the feeling remained with me.

M. Dieufoy, on the other hand, shook me

heartily by the hand, saying how much he had enjoyed my society, and that he hoped we might meet again.

I was permitted, by virtue of the presence of madame and M. l'Abbé, to see the travellers into the St Malo train, and then I took the next train back to Cour-des-Comptes, wondering much what that night and the next few days might have in store for us all.

I took the roundabout path to Vaurel's cottage, and so avoided the village. It was almost dusk when I arrived there, and he was expecting me. The keys of the Château had been left with him by Hortense, acting on mademoiselle's instructions ;

and he proposed that we should go there at once, taking Roussel with us. I had been so busy thinking of other matters that I had overlooked the fact that the sick man would still need our attention ; but there was evidently nothing else to be done with him, and Vaurel had already rigged up a transport hammock by means of a blanket and a long pole.

We carefully put out the fire, which, Vaurel casually remarked, had been alive for over a year ; then, settling Roussel into the hammock, we put the ends of the pole on our shoulders, locked the door, and with Boulot paddling along in front, started out through the shadows for the Château.

## MEXICO TO-DAY.



HERE are not many foreign countries which present so many attractions to the traveller—whether his predilection inclines him to the study of archaeology, botany, geology, birds, beasts, and fishes, or he is merely an admirer of scenery—as old Mexico. The romance of its past history is not so well known as it ought to be ; and from the dim, misty past—when the mysterious race known as the Toltecs constructed their temples, offered their human sacrifices, and carried out their strange rites of sun and snake worship—down to the present day, there has always been a thread of romantic and fascinating unreality entwined in the history of Mexico.

Of the extinction of the Toltecs and the cliff-dwellers by their successors, the Aztecs, but little is known. Whatever the origin of the conquerors, it is certain that they adopted, or continued, most of the forms and ceremonies of the vanquished people in the main national features of government and religion.

One of the saddest pages of history is the conquest of Mexico in 1540 by Cortes, who was sent out by Spain in search of gold. For this reason, and for this alone, was an intelligent, peaceful, and industrious nation sacrificed by that cruel, unprincipled, and relentless robber and murderer. All who read Prescott's history of the conquest of Mexico will shudder at the recital of the wholesale cruelty and murder practised upon the helpless and unsuspecting Aztecs.

From that time until 1820 the fate of Mexico and its inhabitants was the same as Spain has dealt out to all her colonies : they were oppressed, robbed, murdered, and trodden under foot by a long succession of infamous and heartless rulers, whose only creed was their own enrichment, who feared neither God nor man, and whose systematic course of torture and death seems to have been as necessary to them as their daily food. In 1820, however, Mexico aroused herself and threw

off the Spanish yoke. Since then she has made but slow progress, for the majority of her rulers have unfortunately been men who possessed neither education nor those high and noble principles of honour and integrity which alone lead a nation into a progressive, enlightened, and civilised condition.

Happily, Mexico has at present an energetic, liberal-minded, and progressive president—Porfirio Diaz—who was only recently re-elected for another term. The president had occupied the same high office for eight years ; and perhaps it is not too much to say that the republic has made more real, substantial progress under his wise rule than had been made during any other period since 1820. While, on the one hand, he carefully keeps the religious element from interfering with and controlling the civil government, Diaz has also done much towards the repression of crime, the advancement of education, and the development of the commerce of the country. For example, in the promotion of such enterprises as coffee-plantations, sugar and tobacco factories, cotton and flour mills, railway extension, construction of hotels, street-railways, &c., the president offers every facility for the importation of materials and machinery, and encourages speculators and capitalists backed with the requisite credentials.

Of the antiquities of Mexico we need say but little. They are numerous and interesting ; and in the National Museum in the city of Mexico are preserved many objects of great interest, including the calendar-stone, the great sacrificial stone from the war-temple of the Aztecs (on which a young warrior was sacrificed every year with great ceremony by the priests to appease the anger of the ferocious and menacing deity), old armour, pottery, jewellery, feather-work, and many other antiques of absorbing interest to the archaeologist and the antiquary.

The city of Mexico itself is beautiful. It is situated in a valley surrounded by high mountains, some of which are crowned with eternal snow ;

and its broad open plaza, adorned by fine trees and lovely flowers, is the fashionable resort in the evenings, when the military band plays, and the *élite* indulge in a promenade around the plaza, enjoying the soft, balmy air peculiar to that climate. The floating gardens on the lake are very attractive. These were originally large masses of fresh-water plants, which become dense and matted, when the natives deposit baskets of soil on them, and thereby construct a garden. Not being fixed in any way, they really become floating gardens.

Among many objects of interest to visitors are the Cathedral, the president's official residence, and the famous and almost precipitous Castle of Chapultepec. Near by are the remains of the old tree, now carefully guarded by iron railings, where Cortes passed his night of sorrow (*la noche triste*), and the causeway across the lake on which he and his armoured followers fought their way through the hosts of Aztecs into the capital.

There are in Mexico only two classes of people—namely, the highest and the lowest, or the richest and the poorest; there is no middle class. The *élite* or highest class comprises the government officials and army officers, the Roman Catholic clergy, and the rich coffee-planters, *rancheros*, &c. The other class comprises all the working population—such as shepherds, cowboys, artisans, fishermen, and labourers—the *peons*.

Nearly all the stores or shops are in the hands of Germans (many of whom are Jews) and a few Frenchmen; the hotelkeepers are mostly Germans; but the restaurants are kept by Mexicans, who conduct the business according to their national customs—namely, a cup of coffee and a small cake or cigarette for breakfast; lunch or dinner, with meat, fish, &c., at midday; and the chief meal, which you may call either dinner or supper, about seven o'clock. Foreigners, however, prefer European manners and customs; and, therefore, the hotels supply a regular *table d'hôte* breakfast, dinner, and supper.

Although Mexico is only separated from the United States by an imaginary line—for the little Rio Grande cannot really be called a natural barrier between the two republican states—the

high tariffs enforced by both countries prevent a large amount of trade which might be carried on between them; therefore it would be greatly to the advantage of both republics if these duties were considerably reduced or entirely abolished. Uncle Sam demands a high tariff on tobacco, &c., imported from Mexico, and the 'land of God and Liberty' retaliates in like manner. The American ranch-owners want vast herds of young cattle, as well as horses and mules, to stock their ranches; but there is a high and almost prohibitive duty on these animals, which ought to come in free of duty. In fact, the duties on American goods are so high that fancy and leather goods, stationery, decorative articles, chemicals, photographic material, and many other articles can be, and are, more profitably imported direct from France than from Mexico's next-door neighbour, the United States, although there is a difference of several thousands of miles in the distance.

It is somewhat curious that European travellers are not attracted in greater numbers than at present to the republic of Mexico. To the ordinary traveller in search of health or amusement it offers splendid and varied scenery, and a delightful, pure, and health-giving climate. To the capitalist it offers abundant opportunities for his energy and money in many remunerative enterprises; while the climate and the cheapness of food will enable him to keep his expenses down to a nominal sum. To the photographer—amateur or professional—it offers unlimited scope in its varied and magnificent scenery, its mountains, valleys, rivers, forests, volcanoes, its unique villages and dwellings, and the costumes and peculiarities of its natives—all these would supply picturesque objects for his camera in immense variety, and, because of their oddity and rarity, not only captivating but probably also profitable pecuniarily.

Mexico has long had a cloudy and inauspicious reputation for a disregard of life and property; but under the present regime the country is progressing favourably on the onward march of enlightenment and civilisation; and ere long the tourist and traveller will be as safe there as among the peaceful villages of Old England.

## THE BISHOP AND THE CONSTABLE.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.

**F**OR some moments after the Bishop's departure the girls remained speechless with consternation at what seemed to them the incredible folly of which Arthur had been guilty.

'Well,' exclaimed Katie at last, 'you have done it this time!'

'Oh Arthur! how could you be so—so stupid?' exclaimed Helen tearfully.

'It's Frank's clothes you've got on, of course? I thought so. I knew it was one of Frank's silly tricks,' cried Katie. 'What has he been doing now?'

Arthur hurriedly explained what had taken place.

'Well, upon my word,' said Katie, 'you might be a couple of schoolboys.'

'I don't know what uncle will think of you,'



said Helen despairingly, 'when he gets to know the truth. It would have been much better if you had told him at once who you were.'

But with this view of the case Katie emphatically disagreed.

'No; he couldn't possibly have done that, Helen,' she said decidedly. 'You know the Bishop's opinion about clergymen wearing laymen's clothes.'

'Yes,' said Arthur; 'you see, if I'd told him who I was'—

'You'd have had to tell him who Frank was,' interposed Katie.

'Exactly so; and then Frank'—

'And then Frank wouldn't have got the living offered to him. You see that, Helen?'

'I see that, in order to save Frank, Arthur has made himself very ridiculous,' answered Helen with some asperity, 'and given uncle quite a wrong impression of his character; and that's what you don't appear to see, Katie.'

'But look at the awkward position it would have put Frank in,' expostulated Katie.

'Look at the awkward position it has put Arthur in,' retorted Helen. 'I don't see why Arthur should sacrifice himself for Mr Ambrose, and I think he ought to go to uncle at once and explain everything.'

'Very well, I will,' said Arthur. 'It was Ambrose that got me into the scrape, and he must just look after himself.'

But as he was moving to the door Katie hurriedly interposed.

'Oh, no, no!' she exclaimed, 'you must not, you shall not go. Helen, how can you be so selfish? You know very well that the Bishop at this very moment is writing a letter to Frank offering him the living of Little Southam. If he knows what has taken place he may tear it up, and Frank mayn't get another chance for years until I'm—I'm quite an old maid. I didn't think you could be so unfeeling—so—so selfish, Helen.'

She broke down, and sank into a chair with her handkerchief before her eyes. Helen instantly melted.

'Oh, Katie dear, don't cry,' she said, caressing her. 'Arthur shan't go.—You mustn't go, Arthur.'

'Well, just decide what I am to do,' said Arthur a little testily. 'First you tell me to go, and then you tell me not to go.'

'Oh, you mustn't think of going!' exclaimed Katie.—'Helen, tell him not to go.'

'Of course he mustn't go,' said Helen decidedly. '—I'm surprised at you, Arthur. How can you be so unfeeling?'

'And you must promise not to speak a word to the Bishop,' continued Katie—'not to tell him who you are, or anything about Frank until he has posted the letter.—Helen, make him promise.'

'Promise at once, Arthur.'

'Oh, very well, I'll promise,' rejoined Arthur impatiently; 'though I think it's rather hard lines that I should have to take all the blame on my shoulders when it wasn't my fault at all. However, I'll go and look for the fellow and let him have his togs back.'

But as he was on the point of stepping through the window he was confronted by the stalwart form of Jewson the constable.

'Hullo!' he exclaimed. 'What do you want?'

'Ah!' muttered Jewson, stolidly inspecting him; 'middle height, dark moustache, gold spectacles.'

'What does all this mean?' asked Arthur irritably.

'It means that unless you can give a satisfactory account of yourself I must take you into custody on a charge of obtaining money under false pretences.'

'Take me into custody!' exclaimed Arthur, in amazement. 'Why, you ridiculous ass'—

'Now, don't you get excited, sir,' said Jewson calmly. 'You just give me your name and address, and sufficient proof as you are a clergyman, and I'll thank you kindly, sir, and beg pardon for troubling you.'

Now, as Jewson took out his pocket-book to write down the name and address, the Bishop appeared in the doorway with the letter he had just been writing—the letter offering Ambrose the living of Little Southam—in his hand. Through the corner of his eye Arthur perceived that Katie and Helen in the background were ordering him by peremptory gestures to remain silent.

'I decline to give my name and address,' he exclaimed desperately.

'Ah!' exclaimed the Bishop meaningly.

'Are you a clergyman at all?' asked Jewson.

'This person has already confessed to me that he is not a clergyman,' said the Bishop.

'Oh, that's it—is it?' said Jewson, with a sudden change of manner. 'Now, just you come along with me, and let's have no more of your humbuggin'. Come, stir your sticks.'

'On what charge is he arrested?' asked the Bishop.

'On a charge of obtainin' money under false pretences, sir,' replied Jewson deferentially. In spite of his newly-aroused suspicions against any one in clerical garb, he was deeply impressed by his lordship's gaiters, authoritative manner, and majestic appearance.

'Ah! I should have judged so from his appearance,' replied the Bishop. 'He is probably the person described in this letter to the local paper.' He waved his hand towards the scrap of newspaper which still lay on the table.

'That's him, sir,' said Jewson. 'He's well known to the police—he is. Come along.'

'Oh, look here,' said Arthur desperately, 'you know this is past a joke. I tell you I am'—

But the words died on his lips, for at that moment he caught sight of Katie gazing implor-

ingly at him, and pointing at the letter in the Bishop's hand, and of Helen vigorously shaking her head.

'Oh, come on!' he exclaimed despairingly; 'come on!'

Jewson promptly clutched him by the arm and walked him out of the window, the Bishop watching the proceedings with manifest approval.

'I hope the fellow will be severely dealt with,' he said. 'The mere wearing of clergyman's clothes by a layman should be rendered an illegal offence—don't you think so, Helen?'

'Ye—es, uncle,' replied Helen faintly.

'And it should be equally illegal, as it is equally discreditable, for a clergyman to appear in the clothes of the laity. Are you not of my opinion, Miss Leslie?'

'Certainly, your lordship,' stammered Katie.

The Bishop held up the letter with a fatherly smile.

'I think I gave you a hint as to the destination of this note, Miss Leslie,' he remarked.

'It was extremely kind of you,' said Katie.

'Not at all, not at all. Have either of you a stamp? I have unfortunately left my pocket-book at home.'

'I haven't, uncle,' answered Helen.

'Neither have I,' said Katie eagerly; 'but if you will allow me I shall be very pleased to take the letter to the post-office we passed on our way here. I could get the stamp and post the letter at the same time.'

'Oh, dear me, no,' said the Bishop; 'I couldn't think of troubling you.'

'Oh, really, it would be no trouble,' said Katie, eagerly extending her hand. 'Please let me go.'

'No, no; I couldn't think of it. Pray resume your seat. I shall obtain a stamp from the people of the house.'

Katie collapsed despairingly into a seat as the Bishop went out.

'I don't believe that letter will ever be posted,' she groaned; 'and to think it might be on its way to the post-office if I'd only had a stamp.'

The words were hardly out of her mouth when she leapt to her feet with a cry of alarm, for, peering in at the window in his blazer, boating-cap, and scarlet tie, stood the Reverend Frank Ambrose.

'Frank!' she exclaimed.

'Where's the Bishop?' he asked anxiously.

'He may be back here at any moment. He's gone to post a letter offering you the living; but if he should see you in these clothes'—

'Yes, yes,' interposed Ambrose, 'that's just what's worrying me. I want my own clothes back. Wherever has Arthur got to?'

'He's at the police station, Mr Ambrose,' said Helen severely.

'What in the world is he doing there?'

'He's in custody.'

'In custody!' exclaimed Ambrose.

'Yes,' explained Katie hurriedly. 'You see, a swindler has been going about in clergyman's clothes, and the constable thought it was Arthur, and—and the Bishop was here, and he couldn't explain, and so the constable took him up.'

'Poor old Arthur,' chuckled Ambrose, 'what a state he'll be in! But, I say, it's awfully awkward, you know. How am I to get my clothes?'

'And how is he to get his clothes?' asked Helen, who was beginning to think that Arthur's self-sacrifice had been carried quite far enough.

'Exactly so,' rejoined Ambrose. 'We have got into a nice mess. I don't see how we're to get out of it either.'

'I think the only possible way of getting out of it, Mr Ambrose,' said Helen coldly, 'is for you to go and explain everything to the Bishop.'

'How can you suggest such a thing, Helen?' cried Katie impatiently. 'How can he go and see the Bishop in a blazer? Hush, hush! he's coming.—Frank, go in there. Quick, quick!'

Ambrose darted into an adjoining room, and closed the door just as the Bishop came in.

'The people of the house,' said his lordship, 'to use their own expressive idiom, "haven't a stamp to bless themselves with." I shall, therefore, post the letter when we return to Southpool this evening. I must see about hiring a conveyance.'

'There now,' said Helen tearfully as he quitted the room; 'if Arthur waits till that letter's posted he'll have to be shut up all night. Oh, it's dreadful! What are we to do?'

At that moment the door opened and Mary appeared, Jewson glancing over her shoulder.

'If you please, miss,' said Mary, 'did a young man in a boating-jacket, with a scarlet tie, come in at the window just now?'

'Yes,' answered Katie.

'Did he go out again, miss?'

'No,' rejoined Katie impatiently. 'He went into that room.'

'Oh, he did—did he?' exclaimed Jewson. 'Then I'll soon get him out of it again.'

He darted into the room, and came out again, dragging Ambrose along with him.

'You preposterous idiot,' cried Ambrose, 'what's the meaning of this?'

'Don't you be alarmed, young ladies,' said Jewson. 'It's only another of the same gang. This young woman seen him changing clothes with the other fellow to throw the police off the scent. Come along with you, now. It'll be best for you.'

'I shall not; most certainly not,' exclaimed Ambrose. 'Leave me alone. Let me go, I tell you. Do you hear me? Let me go.'

At that moment the Bishop's voice was distinctly audible outside.

'Thank you, thank you; it's of no consequence—not the slightest consequence. I'll post the letter on my return.'

Ambrose was panic-stricken.

'Take me away at once by the window,' he

whispered hurriedly. 'Quick, you ass! Here's a sovereign. Quick, I tell you; quick!'

He almost dragged Jewson, who was still clutching his collar, out of the window as the Bishop came in.

'Ah!' exclaimed the Bishop, catching a glimpse of the retreating figures. 'The police here again? Who is it this time?'

'It's only another of the same gang,' said Katie feebly.

'Ah! seems to be an active, intelligent officer that,' said the Bishop, moving to the window, while the girls watched him with horror-stricken countenances.

'Stop him, Helen,' whispered Katie in an agony of apprehension.

'Uncle!' exclaimed Helen.

'Yes, my dear,' said the Bishop, wheeling round.

'Would you kindly ring the bell? It's just beside you. I do so want some tea, and these people are so slow.'

'Certainly, my dear,' he replied good-humouredly; and, ringing the bell, again stepped towards the window.

'Oh Helen!' groaned Katie.

'Uncle!'

'Yes, yes, my dear, one moment. Ah! they are out of sight. Now, it's a singular thing; but the back-view of the person that officer had in custody appeared strangely familiar to me. Now, who was it? Who could it be?'

Just at that moment Mary entered the room with a letter in her hand, which she placed on the mantelpiece.

'Did you ring, sir?' she asked.

'Yes, my good girl. These young ladies would like some tea at once, if you please.'

'Yes, sir. It'll be ready in a minute, sir.'

As she went out the Bishop, who was standing near the mantelpiece, glanced absent-mindedly at the address on the envelope.

'Eh—what's this?' he exclaimed—"The Rev. Frank Ambrose, The Red Lion Inn, Higgleston." Why, Ambrose must be staying here. I needn't post the letter at all.'

Katie and Helen looked at each other with an expression of almost tragic despair as the Bishop stood gazing out of the window in a reflective attitude.

'Now, dear me,' said he musingly, 'why should I, in some curious way, connect Ambrose with the back-view of the person who— Ah!—hum—I—I think I shall make a few inquiries.'

As he moved to the door he shot a peculiar look at Katie, who was trying to hide her face behind a book.

'It'll all come out,' moaned Katie when he had disappeared. 'I know it will. He'll get to know everything. Oh, if I could only have got hold of that letter! I knew it would never be posted.'

As she spoke she hid her face in the sofa-cushion and sobbed audibly.

'Don't cry like that, Katie dear,' expostulated Helen. 'Suppose the Bishop should come in.'

'I—I should like to box the Bishop's ears,' sobbed Katie.

'Katie!'

'I should. He'll go and—and pry into everything; and I don't believe he'll post that letter after all.'

'Oh! do hush,' pleaded Helen. 'Some one's coming.'

It was Mary, who announced that the tea was ready in another room.

'Well,' said Mary to herself when they had gone out, 'Joe seems to have done it at last; and if anything comes of it I suppose I shall be Mrs Jewson after all. Well, I suppose I might have done worse. Why, there he is.'

Jewson had once more appeared at the window.

'What! back again, Joe?' she exclaimed. 'Are you after more of them? You've done it this time, Joe.'

'Ay, I have done it, Mary,' replied Jewson lugubriously. 'I've put my big foot in it again—that's what I've done. I got hold of the wrong parties. Them two gentlemen's explained everything, and I've had to let 'em go. I've made a bloomin' hass of myself—that's what I've done. I've just got a telegram from Southpool sayin' as the party wanted is understood to be personatin' the Bishop of Hamchester.'

'The Bishop of Hamchester!' exclaimed Mary.

'Why, that's the name as the party in the queer hat and the knee-breeches gave to the missis.'

'Where is he?' exclaimed Jewson excitedly. 'Where is he? Let me get my hands on him. I'll do it this time, Mary—you see if I don't.'

## THE EDIBLE FROG IN ENGLAND.



ALTHOUGH the edible frog had long been known to have a wide range in the northern hemisphere, it was not until 1843 that it was recorded as a British species. It was then discovered in Foulmire Fen, Cambridgeshire, by Mr Charles Thurnall, of Daxford, whose capture of the reptile is announced in

a letter written by Mr J. P. Wollaston, preserved in the Cambridge Museum. A short notice of the finding of the frogs also appeared in the *Zoologist*, where Mr F. Bond stated that he believed them to be very rare; but he afterwards found they were fairly abundant in the neighbourhood of Foulmire, where their curious croaking, 'a loud snore, exactly like that of the barn-owl,'



had gained for them the names of 'Cambridgeshire Nightingales' and 'Whaddon Organs.'

As soon as they were known to be numerous in the district several people came forward with assertions that they had long been aware there was a species of frog peculiar to the locality; but these statements were of little value. Professor Bell, the author of *British Reptiles*, however, sent to the *Zoologist* a letter which deserved more attention. In it he said: 'I have often heard my father, who was a native of these parts, say that the croak of the frogs there was so different from that of others that he thought they must be of a different kind.' Mr Bond expressed surprise that the frogs had never before been observed at Foulmire, for when he visited the place 'the whole fen was quite in a charm with their song.'

Dr J. E. Taylor, the late curator of the Ipswich Museum, believed that the edible frog was indigenous, but rare in Cambridgeshire. The fact that the creature was practically confined to Foulmire, so far as the county is concerned, seems, however, to indicate that it must at some time have been introduced into the district. On this point the late Canon Kingsley may be quoted. Writing in *Prose Idyls* on 'The Fens,' he brings forward as evidence in support of the theory that the Eastern Fens were once connected by land with the Continent the presence of the edible frog at Foulmire. 'It is a moot point still with some,' he says, 'whether he was not put there by man. It is a still stronger argument against his being indigenous that he is never mentioned as an article of food by the medieval monks, who would have known—Frenchmen, Italians, Germans, as many of them were—that he is as dainty as ever was a spring chicken. But if he be indigenous, his presence proves at once that he could either hop across the Straits of Dover or swim across the German Ocean.' In the opinion of most authorities, the idea that the edible frog is indigenous to this country may be abandoned, for if the conditions existing at Foulmire were favourable to its preservation, there is no reason why it should not have bred undisturbed for centuries in other fenny districts which were undrained until a comparatively recent date. If it had existed in England from the time when this country was connected with the Continent, specimens ought to have been forthcoming from the south-eastern counties. How it came to Foulmire has never been satisfactorily explained; but there is little doubt that it was imported, as it was into an adjoining county.

Although the discovery of edible frogs at Foulmire aroused considerable interest for a time among naturalists, the subject was eventually dropped for several years. Then it was revived by Professor Alfred Newton, who, while driving through a marshy district in Norfolk, heard a strange noise which puzzled him until it proved

to be the croaking of a considerable number of edible frogs. Through the courtesy of Mr S. H. Miller, of Lowestoft, I am permitted to quote from a letter he received from Professor Newton, who writes: 'As to the edible frog in Norfolk—it was in 1853 that my brother and I found a colony at Rockland. . . . Last May (1876) I found another at Stow Bedon, not very far off; and in the meanwhile it had not been observed by any naturalist, so far as I know. But Lord Walsingham, who was with me on the second occasion, has since ascertained that it is pretty well established in the neighbourhood of Didlington.' As soon as Professor Newton first found the frogs at Rockland, he made inquiries as to their origin, and learnt from Mr J. H. Gurney of Keswick Hall that Mr George Berney of Morton Hall had imported a quantity of them from France in 1837. Two years later the same gentleman imported two hundred more; and in 1841 and 1842 over one thousand were brought by him into Norfolk, and deposited in the ditches and fields at Morton, in some ponds at Hockering, and in the fens at Foulden, near Stoke Ferry. As Foulden is quite close to Didlington, there is little doubt that the frogs recorded by Lord Walsingham as being fairly plentiful at the latter place were the descendants of those liberated at Foulden. According to Mr Gurney, those that were placed in the meadows soon left them for the nearest ponds, where they gradually disappeared, and Mr Berney came to the conclusion that the English climate was not suited to them. Lord Walsingham's discovery, however, tends to prove that they were a long time in becoming entirely extinct; and Professor Newton was satisfied that the species had 'made good its existence in Norfolk for at least thirty-four years.'

When naturalists heard of Mr Berney's experiment, interest was reawakened in the discovery at Foulmire; and as Mr Berney's frogs were liberated in Norfolk six years before the latter event, there were not wanting theorists who suggested that some of the Norfolk frogs had found their way to Foulmire. 'Is it possible,' asked Mr Miller in *The Fenland*, 'that some of these [the Norfolk frogs] travelled from Foulden to Foulmire, a distance of about forty miles?' He agreed that, while possible, this was not a probable explanation of their presence at Foulmire, as 'there is no record of their having been taken between those places.'

In 1874 Mr Miller wrote to *Nature*, asking for information respecting the naturalisation of the species. This was supplied by Lord Arthur Russell, who said that he had, some twelve years before, brought some edible frogs from Paris and placed them in a pond at Woburn Abbey. He added: 'They thrived and multiplied there; but our summers are seldom hot enough to enable the tadpole to attain his full development before the cold

autumnal nights set in. . . . I believe that in our climate the young will pass the winter as tadpoles, and complete their transformation in the following spring. But this would require more accurate information before I can affirm it with certainty.' The experience of Mr Doubleday, of Epping, who liberated some of the Cambridgeshire frogs in a pond near his home, was that 'they soon migrated to another pond, and there made themselves perfectly at home.' He does not say how long they were to be found there.

For further information concerning edible frogs in England we must turn to the *Transactions of the Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society* (vol. iii.). As has already been stated, Mr Bond was the first to record their occurrence in Cambridgeshire. In his letter to the *Zoologist* he said that all the specimens he had examined had, when croaking, 'two large bladders, one on each side of the mouth, which gave it a very curious appearance.' These vocal sacs are characteristic of the male edible frog; and until the publication of the third volume of the *Transactions* no one had doubted that the frogs found in Norfolk and at Foulmire were of other than the edible species. Mr Thomas Southwell, however, who has for a long time been one of the most active and observant members of the Norfolk Society, reported 'that Mr G. A. Boulenger has examined specimens of the Cambridgeshire

and recent Norfolk specimens. To his surprise, he finds they all belong to a very distinct race peculiar to Italy, and not the typical form of Central Europe.' Mr Boulenger himself says: 'It is clear to me, therefore, that all the specimens, the capture of which has hitherto been recorded, whether from Cambridgeshire or Norfolk, are not the descendants of those imported by Mr Berney, but are of Italian origin. By whom, and when, they were introduced into this country I cannot venture to suggest.' Mr Southwell thinks it possible they may have been introduced from Italy by Roman monks, or that Mr Berney may have accidentally imported Italian frogs which had found their way into the north of France.

I have recently made inquiries in the localities where Mr Berney liberated his frogs and Professor Newton discovered colonies of them, and from what I can gather the species is quite extinct there. Mr Gurney has heard of no edible frogs being found in Norfolk for some years. Professor Newton, writing in 1876, said that not a single example of the species had been seen or heard at Foulmire for some twenty-six or twenty-seven years, though the place had often been visited by Cambridge naturalists. Therefore, unless fresh importations have been made in recent years, it is probable that the edible frog does not now exist in a wild state in England.

## A NOVEL EXECUTION.

**S**OME years ago I was making a tour on foot through the south of Germany, and had spent a week in the pleasant old town of Stuttgart, passing the time in idle enjoyment. I then started off in an easterly direction, as I wanted to explore the mountainous regions which abound in that part of the country, and which are remarkable for the rugged scenery so dear to the eye of an artist. My luggage was simple, consisting merely of a knapsack which contained a few necessary articles of clothing, some tobacco, a little money, and my painting materials; for I intended to rely for what simple food I required entirely on the hospitality of the numerous woodcutters and charcoal-burners who are scattered over the mountains. This plan I carried out successfully enough, and slowly I made my way through the mountains, taking my own time, and always finding, as I expected, food and shelter for the night from the kindly peasants. They seemed always glad of my company to while away the evening, and seldom objected to share my tobacco. Early in the morning, while the mists were yet over everything, I would bid my host farewell and wander on as before, sketching and smoking till night again compelled me to seek shelter.

After some time spent in this way, I came to the ring of mountains which stand up like a mighty rampart round the western side of Bohemia. There my travels ended, for I intended to make my way back to England as quickly as possible, owing to engagements at home.

It was while traversing these mountains that the incident which I am about to relate took place.

On my second day in these regions I had been sketching all day as usual; a gorgeous sunset seen from a lofty peak had stayed my progress for some time, while I endeavoured to transfer the lovely tints of the little clouds that flecked the horizon to my sketch-book. When these had died away I packed up and began to think of trying to procure a shelter for the night, which had quickly come on. I looked round, hoping to see the familiar red glare of the woodman's fire, but I was disappointed, and so walked on, keeping a bright lookout the while.

At last I saw a faint twinkling light straight in front of me, and accordingly bent my way in its direction. As I neared the light I made out the form of some large building looming out in the darkness. This I guessed to be one of those small fortresses which are placed in the chief passes for defence against invasion. My surmise was proved

correct by the loud challenge of a sentinel, '*Wer da?*' Giving the customary answer, I advanced to the bastion where the sentinel was standing, and explained to him my dilemma. He called to another man, who ran off and returned immediately with a young officer. The latter greeted me courteously, and said, after some conversation, that if I wished I might spend the night in the fort. This offer I gladly accepted, and being admitted into the fort, was conducted by the young officer to his quarters. Soon a substantial meal was set before me; and during the repast, in which he joined, I told him who and what I was, and explained how I came to be there at such a time. He was not surprised, for he said at that time of the year many tourists found their way even to that lonely spot. 'Yes,' he added, 'we have given many shelter here, and only exact from them a promise that they will make no drawings or plans of the fort; and we, of course, shall ask the same of you.' I gave the required promise, and then showed him my sketches, with which he seemed much pleased, recognising many places, and expatiating the while on the beauty of his beloved country, in which I heartily joined. He then told me he was a lieutenant of artillery, and was in command of the small detachment which formed the garrison of the fort.

'And don't you find it very dull up here all alone?' I asked. 'No,' he answered; 'not so dull as you might think by any means. You see, there is plenty of game to be had, large and small, for the shooting; the scenery is delightful to me, who, like you, am a bit of an artist; and then the banditti usually provide a little additional excitement.' 'What!' said I, 'are there banditti about here, then?' 'Yes,' he answered; 'most certainly, though not in the direction from which you have come. But as you proceed into Bohemia you will find the mountains infested with them, and I shall send an escort down with you to-morrow. Indeed, in these piping times of peace, it is chiefly for the purpose of escorting travellers through the mountains that we are here. You will have a specially strong escort to-morrow, though, as we have here at present, confined in the fort, a notorious bandit we captured but yesterday, in a raid on his hiding-place; and to-morrow I shall send him down to Rabensburg for trial. There is no doubt what his fate will be. Two murders have been proved against him, and there are numerous unproved ones and hundreds of robberies down to his name. It is, as you say, a long way to send him; but Rabensburg is our headquarters, and he will be tried by the military there. But you must be tired and glad to get to bed.' Saying this, he showed me to a small bedroom and left me to my slumbers.

I was awakened early the next morning by the sound of a bugle, and was soon out to enjoy the fresh air and fine scenery. I was immediately struck by the strong position of the fort, the site

on which it was built being admirably adapted for defence. The road, if road it could be called—perhaps pass would be a better word—here ran for a full mile in a kind of glen or gully, lined on either side by lofty and precipitous rocks, which, towering up high on each side, left only a narrow way in the middle. Standing in the centre of this gully you could look along the path about half a mile each way, at which distance it came to a stop, the road suddenly dipping down, on one side to Rabensburg, and on the other towards a forest. It was in the middle of this valley, or rather cutting, that the fort had been built, stretching across the narrow way from one wall to the other, so that, if necessary, the road could be completely blocked and swept by the guns of the fort. In times of peace the fort had a gate left permanently open, allowing travellers to walk right through it and pursue their way to the farther side.

My friend the lieutenant soon joined me, and I remarked on the strong position held by the fort. 'Yes,' said he, smiling, 'I think we could give a good account of ourselves before an enemy could pass along the road from end to end;' and he pointed to the three guns mounted on each side commanding the two roads. A large one was in the middle and a smaller one was on each side of it, and very formidable they looked. He said I might leave them at noon, when the escort for the prisoner would be ready. Hardly had he finished speaking when a shout was heard in the fort, followed by a report of a rifle and a babel of cries. The officer rushed down to see what was the matter, I following him closely. Arrived at the square, we found a crowd of soldiers assembled round a man lying on the ground, bleeding profusely from a wound in the shoulder. The officer was quickly told the cause of the tumult. The bandit, while being led out of his cell, preparatory to being marched away, had suddenly stabbed a soldier with a hidden knife, and, taking advantage of the surprise he had created, had escaped from the fort, though a sentry had fired at him. He was soon descried flying down the road which led to the forest, and several men started in pursuit. The officer was about to follow them, when a grizzled veteran touched his shoulder and said a few words to him. 'Are you quite sure you can do it, gunner?' asked the lieutenant. 'Perfectly certain, sir,' replied the old soldier. 'I will lay my life on it she will not fail us at this moment.' 'Very well, then,' said the lieutenant; 'recall the men.' The bugle rang out, and the pursuers turned and slowly retraced their steps to the fort. 'After all,' he went on, 'it is our best chance, for they could never catch him. Just look at the pace he is going at! I would not lose that scoundrel for anything; and if we cannot take him alive we must anticipate his fate, and take him dead.' Several men had been potting at the fugitive with their rifles, but without



success; so he ordered them to desist, as it was only throwing away ammunition.

Lighting a cigarette, he sat down and calmly watched the ever-lessening form of the brigand. I now went up to him and asked the reason of this strange apathy on the part of the garrison. 'Don't be in a hurry, my friend,' replied he, smiling; 'we are not so lazy and foolish as doubtless you think. Listen to me.' He then explained that, just as he was also starting in pursuit of the fugitive, the old gunner had told him that there was a far quicker and surer method of arresting him than that of pursuit. The big gun in the centre of the rampart on that side had, by constant practice, been trained to throw its projectile exactly in the middle of the narrow path, just before it dipped out of sight, and had been kept permanently in that position. 'And,' the lieutenant went on, 'Gunner Müller is ready to swear that a ball or shell thrown from that gun will hit the exact spot, provided the gun has not shifted. Now, in that case, all we have to do is to wait till our friend there gets on, or near, that spot, and there you are! You see it is impossible for him to turn to the right or left till he gets out of the pass, owing to the precipices on either side.—You know, Müller,' said he, turning to the gunner who was standing by, 'the right kind of shell for this case?' 'Yes, sir,' said the soldier, saluting; 'I know the very thing required, and if the rascal is within ten yards' radius of the bursting-point he won't gain the end of that path.' 'Good,' said the officer; 'load!' The heavy shell was hoisted into the breech and everything was got ready for the shot. This all happened in much less time than it takes to describe it, and now the man was within eighty yards of the fatal spot. After finding that he was not pursued, he had relaxed the speed at which he started from the fort, and was now trotting steadily on towards the desired goal, keeping in the middle of the path, and no doubt congratulating himself on his escape. When within thirty yards of the place he dropped to a leisurely walk, looking round

continually to make sure that no one was after him. Once he stopped, and, turning round, made what seemed a gesture of contempt at the fort, and, having thus relieved his feelings, walked on again.

Slowly he neared the fatal spot. All on the fort were breathless with suspense and doubt, for it seemed quite possible that the gun might somehow have got shifted since the last practice. Only the old gunner was calm and confident, and lovingly eyed his great charge. I was standing with the lieutenant near the gun, and the wall was lined with every man in the fort, all eagerly gazing at that small, dark spot moving so slowly on.

As the bandit neared the end of the path the old gunner handed the lanyard of the gun to a subordinate and bade him fire when he lifted his foot. Then, taking a telescope, he directed his gaze on the fugitive. A deadly silence reigned in the fort. I could hear my heart beating plainly, and I believe every gun man was in an equal tremor of excitement. I half-hoped that the man, robber and murderer though he was, might escape.

When would the signal be given? The suspense was becoming unendurable. I looked at Müller—he was gazing through the telescope. Suddenly he kicked out his leg, still keeping his eye to the glass. A vivid flash followed, a deafening roar, which shook the fort, and then a cloud of white smoke obscured everything. When it had cleared away, Müller was standing beside my companion, with a look of content on his face. 'I was right, sir,' he cried; 'he was hit fair.'

True enough, nothing was to be seen where the bandit had been. A loud cheer followed the announcement, and the officer shook hands heartily with Müller, and retired to make a report of the matter, while a party were sent to collect the remains of the victim. A few hours later I left the fort with my escort, after a hearty farewell to the commandant. As we passed the fatal spot I shuddered to see unmistakable signs of the accuracy of the shot, and hurried on to leave the ill-omened place behind.

## NATAL WATTLE-BARK.



AN important industry has sprung up in Natal within the last few years in the growing of wattle-trees (*Acacia mollissima*, or mimosa), the bark of which is exported to

Great Britain and to the Continent for tanning purposes. The trees were originally planted on farms as shelter for houses and crops, and it was some time before their real value was discovered. Formerly the principal supply of bark came from Australia. There, we believe, it is stripped from wild indigenous wattle-trees;

thus the Australian quality cannot be so regular as that from Natal, where all the trees are planted, and are barked when they come to maturity, in from five to seven years.

The usual method of planting the trees is to break up the land and sow a crop of mealies. When the mealies come up a few inches, the wattle-seed is planted in the following way: Straight lines are marked out about six feet apart; native labourers or coolies then walk up these lines and make holes seven feet apart with a hoe, and other men following them drop in a

few seeds, covering these by scraping back the soil with the foot. In three weeks the trees begin to show above ground; then the ground is gone over again, and all the blanks are filled up. Sowing is generally done in December, the seed being gathered from the trees during the previous month. This seed being very hard, it is soaked in hot water before planting.

The mealie crop is gathered in May and June, and the cattle turned on to eat off the stalks do not harm the young trees in dry weather. The second year the trees are thinned out, only leaving one in each space. Being in rows close together, the trees grow up tall and straight, with few branches except near the top; some will attain a height of sixty feet or more according to soil and climate. It is a very pretty, graceful tree, and when in full yellow bloom these plantations of hundreds of acres make a sight to be remembered, although on some days the scent is almost overpowering.

The wattle-trees do best on the high ground and hills round Pietermaritzburg, where they get sufficient moisture, the summer being often rather wet; but the trees thrive best in damp weather, as they need an immense supply of moisture. If planted near a small watercourse they soon dry it up.

Either coolie or Kaffir labour is employed for stripping the trees. The bark is cut close to the ground and beaten with the back of an axe to loosen and split it; then it is removed by hand and torn into strips. As there are few branches, the strips are twelve feet or more in length. The tree is then cut down, the branches and top lopped off, and the trunk thoroughly barked. The pieces of bark are now cut into ten-foot lengths, tied in bundles of about fifty pounds weight each, and taken to the drying-shed; and when dry the strips are again cut up and sent to the mill to be cut into small pieces and packed in sacks for export.

In cutting down a plantation it is usual to go through it and take out all the biggest trees, and the following year all those left are cut down and the stumps and brushwood burnt. As the fallen seeds germinate, in a few years there is a good plantation of self-planted trees. For the timber itself there is only a small demand at present for pit-props and firewood; but inquiries are being made as to the suitability of the wood as pulp for papermaking.

On some of the larger farms the bark is cut, packed, and shipped direct. In winter, there being little or no rain, a large quantity is cut in five-foot lengths and dried outside; but the colour of this is not equal to shed-dried bark. A good plantation will yield about five tons of bark per acre; and its present value before it is cut and packed in sacks is about 5s. per cwt.

The demand seems on the increase, and planting is largely carried on. Lately a shipment of

500 tons was sent on trial to Australia. In 1895 New South Wales imported, chiefly from Tasmania, 80,770 cwt., valued at £19,634—the value of the export from Natal for the same year being £17,200; in 1898 the exports had risen to 188,553 cwt., valued at £30,929: namely, to Great Britain, 173,619 cwt.; Cape Colony, 3380 cwt.; Germany, 6880 cwt.; Holland, 454 cwt.; Delagoa Bay, 4200 cwt. In 1898 the lands in Natal under wattles extended to 21,838 acres.

No doubt when this present war is over and South Africa is under the Southern Cross flag of a United South Africa (or is it to be the Dominion of South Africa?) the colonies will make rapid progress in the arts of peace. Then, we may hope, wattle timber as well as the bark will find a profitable market.

#### LONGING.

THE green road, the clean road: it is so broad and high;

It stretches from the happy sea to touch the happy sky. Oh! I laughed once to forsake it, but I'm longing now to take it—

The green road, the clean road, that is so broad and high.

The gray street, the gay street: how solemnly it shines!

The sun imprints his pleasures, but there's pain between the lines.

Oh, I smiled at first to see it, but I'm eager now to flee it—

The gray street, the gay street: how solemnly it shines!

The pure love, the sure love comes over me like rain; The tinsel of my heartless love is turning poor and plain.

It's my life I have been giving just to make a decent living,

It's my all I have been losing just to get a little gain.

The nest song, the best song is crying swift and sweet: The tune's within my bosom, but the time's not in my feet.

Ah! they only sing for pity, do the voices in the city.

Did you ever hear a homely song sound happy in the street?

The gray street, the gay street: for me it holds no rest,

Not even when the summer sun is sailing down the west;

And I cannot find my pleasure in a road my sight can measure

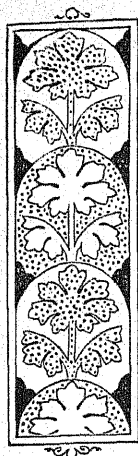
From the little room I dwell in with a memory for my guest.

The green road, the clean road: it is so broad and high,

It stretches from the happy sea to touch the happy sky. Oh, to rise and part with sadness! oh, to move and meet with gladness,

On the green road, the clean road, that is so broad and high!

J. J. BELL.

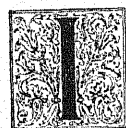


# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### DOG-FANCYING.

By LOUIS MELLARD.



ONCE heard an old lady declare that if she had a dog she would have one of those great Sarah Bernhardt dogs that dig the dear old monks out of the snow in Switzerland. Those of you who know only a little about dogs will smile loftily at the old lady's ignorance; but, believe me, there are scores of dog-owners who know no more than the lady with the leanings towards the Sarah Bernhardt breed.

One is apt to excuse such ignorance in ladies; but when I meet a man who doesn't even know the breed of the dog he is paying a tax for I feel inclined to—to muzzle him; any conscientious dog-fancier would. I remember being invited by an old school-chum to spend a week-end at his seaside bungalow a few years ago. Knowing my hobby, he wrote: 'Amongst other things, I have just bought a mastiff, and want your opinion of him.' I was at once interested, because I had two fine specimens (prize-winners, too) of the same breed. The morning after my arrival he proudly showed me the animal. *It was a cross-bred St Bernard collie!* I broke the information to him gently. Really, I cannot say whether he was annoyed most at me or the dog. But he shot the dog.

While on the subject of people's ignorance of canine breeds I would like to tell one more story, vouched for by a professional dog-breeding friend of mine. One afternoon a lady called at his kennels, and one of his men approached her. The following dialogue ensued between the lady and the yardman: 'I live in the suburbs of X., and want a good house-dog—one that you can guarantee.' 'Yes, ma'am.' 'I don't want one that will keep us awake all night, barking at nothing.' 'No, ma'am.' 'He must be big and strong and—er—rather fierce, you know.' 'Yes, ma'am.' 'But gentle as a lamb, you know, with us.' 'Yes, ma'am.' 'And he must drive off every tramp that comes along.' 'Yes, ma'am.' 'But I

shouldn't like him to interfere with any poor but honest man looking for work.' 'No, ma'am.' 'If a burglar comes prowling around at night, he must pounce on him at once.' 'Yes, ma'am.' 'But he mustn't attack a neighbour who makes an evening call.' 'No, ma'am.' 'And—er—he mustn't go for people who come hurrying to our house at all hours of the night to call my husband. He's a doctor—and that would be awkward.' 'I see, ma'am, what you want—a first-class thought-reader dog.' 'Yes; I suppose that's the kind. Can you send me one?' 'I'm very sorry, ma'am; but we're out of 'em at present. We've only got quite ordinary dogs in just now.' 'Oh dear! I suppose we shall have to wait. By the way, are they very expensive?' 'Well, ma'am, they are, rather; you see, they're a bit scarce.' 'Are they, really? Well, when you get one of that breed (!) be sure to let me know.' 'I will, ma'am.'

Sagacious and intelligent as the average dog is, I fear this good lady was too exacting in her demands. This intelligence, some fanciers aver, is mainly a matter of breed, or rather largely influenced by breed and its thoroughness. I beg to differ. My experience—which covers most sorts of dogs, good, bad, and indifferent—has convinced me that practically all dogs are equally intelligent, in the ordinary sense of the term; that thoroughbred dogs are no more sagacious than the dog of very doubtful antecedents. In fact, I have seen marked intelligence in many a worthless mongrel. But when we come to speak of sagacity from the *sporting* point of view, the case is different. Then the well-bred dog shows his superiority. It is against nature to expect a ramshackle, mixed-bred retriever to follow the gun with the same keen perception as his brother with a clean, clear, unbroken line of forebears.

Of course, as a dog-fancier, one would have no canine following at one's heels that could not show at least some signs of pedigree; yet most dog-lovers, I fancy, can on occasion show a sneak-



ing sympathy for the poor outcast mongrel. The stain of the hybrid's birth can sometimes be partly washed away by definite training. One afternoon I was returning home by train from a certain Midland dog-show, when a little, sharp-featured man in the opposite corner of the compartment accosted me: 'They've got some nice pups up at the dog-show, sir.' 'Yes,' I answered tentatively. 'But I've a dog at home I wouldn't exchange for the best of 'em!' 'No? What breed is he?' 'Don't exactly know, sir; but I calls him a coaly.' 'Perhaps you mean a collie?' 'No, sir; I means just what I said—a coaly. Money wouldn't tempt me to part with that dog. No, sir. He's a bit of all sorts, a fair mongrel perhaps; but we couldn't keep house without him. You see, when I first had him, several years ago, I trained him to bark at all the railway trains as they passed our house. That's his sole work—barking at trains; and he does howl round 'em, 'specially coal-trains. Well, he annoys those railway men so much that every driver on the line has sworn to kill him. But he's a valuable dog, sir.' 'I still fail to see where his value comes in,' was my innocent comment. 'Well, sir, you'd admit his value if you lived in my place and had all the coal you could burn, and some over to sell, thrown at your back-door free of cost.'

Evidently that dog was not to be despised.

Another rogue of a dog was the mastiff trained by some Parisian thieves to go bounding up against old gentlemen in the street. Naturally the average old gentleman cannot stand against four feet or so of powerful mastiff. A 'lady' and 'gentleman' (owners of the dog) would promptly step forward, and, with profuse apologies, assist the fallen man to his feet. They would also ease him of his watch or similar trifles at the same time.

So you see training is worth much when, without training, the dog might be worth nothing. I knew a man who trained his dog never to bark. Three years were necessary for perfect success in the making of a non-barking dog; and my friend flattered himself that he had a novelty. But I am inclined to think that he would not have wasted those three years had he known that there are at least three varieties of dog that never bark—the Australian dog, the Egyptian shepherd-dog, and the 'lion-headed' dog of Tibet. In some Japanese cities a non-barking dog would be deemed valuable, for there they have a quaint law which makes the owner of a night-barker liable to arrest and the penalty of a year's work for the benefit of neighbours who may have been disturbed. The fact that the barking of a dog on the earth can be heard by a balloonist at a height of about four miles does not appeal to the average man so much as the fact that that same barking can often be heard four streets away.

Some people still believe in the superstition that the howling of a dog is always followed by death. That notion ought to be exploded—so

many of the people who attempt to shoot such dogs are bad marksmen.

My uncle, a fervid dog-hater, lived between a retired army major on the one hand and a wealthy shipbroker on the other. This latter gentleman had a barking dog that was the bane of my uncle's life. At last, growing desperate, my uncle wrote a polite note to the man of ships saying that if he would only get rid of the animal he would recompense him to the extent of a sovereign. The shipbroker's servant came round almost immediately with the message that her master would do his best to sell the dog at once. Needless to say, my worthy dog-hating relative considered this very kind, and said as much. Late in the afternoon of the same day my uncle happened to be in the City and called in at the shipbroker's office. 'Have you succeeded in getting rid of the dog?' he asked. 'Oh yes, I've got rid of him,' was the reply. 'Ah! now I can sleep at night.' He was about to pay out the gold coin according to promise, when he thought himself to ask what had become of the tormentor. 'Oh,' said the broker airily, 'I sold him to that old army chap next door to you for half-a-sovereign this afternoon. Wasn't bad—was it?' Uncle's reply, I understand, was quite unpublishable.

Once, while on a visit at this testy old gentleman's house, I went out for a long country-side stroll, taking with me my rough-haired terrier—a breed I am particularly fond of, for its intelligence is beyond doubt. Reaching a village some twelve miles from home, and feeling fatigued, I decided to return by train. It was not until I reached the station just in time to snatch a ticket for the only train back that evening that I discovered the terrier was not at my heels or thereabouts. Over supper I related the incident to my uncle. I noticed he smiled. So did I. For about four o'clock the following morning my little rough-haired gentleman arrived and clamoured vocally to get in! He yelled all round the house till I let him inside. He had never been to that village before, and he had spent only three days in my uncle's house. This, I think, will answer the frequently asked question, 'Can dogs find their way home from a distance?' Yes, if they are fairly old and not 'held up' by some member of that numerous class who augment their income by 'finding' lost dogs and claiming the advertised reward.

A witty dog-fancier, on being asked this self-same question by a lady about to purchase her first poodle, said, 'Well, madam, it all depends on the dog. If it's one you wish to lose, he will find his way back from a place two hundred miles off; but if he's a dog you value, he's apt to get lost going round the corner of your own house.' Here is a true story in corroboration. I overheard it myself, passing through the slums of a Midland city. A heavy-eyebrowed, bullet-headed

man was seated on his doorstep smoking a clay, when he shouted across to a kindred spirit similarly employed, 'Say, Bill, yer remembers that dog as I picked up larst week?' 'Yes.' 'Well, I tried two 'ull days ter sell 'im, an' nobody 'ud gie me more'n two bob; so I went like a 'onest man to the old lady wot 'ad lost 'im, an' she give me ten bob.' And that sort of thing goes on almost daily in our larger cities. The best dogs, after being 'lifted,' are generally sold away in some other town.

Dog-fancying, or the love of dogs, is not an acquired taste. The man who likes not a dog has a meanness, a flaw, somewhere in his soul. Such a man may, perhaps, grow to like one particular dog, say, through association or environment; but he has never an eye for the other dogs in the world. Therefore, he is no true dog-lover. The man with the real, the instinctive fancy for a dog has always an eye for all dogs. Many men love a dog, not for his intrinsic value,

but because he is a *dog*—an animal with but few faults and a more than human virtue—faithfulness.

In the north of England, where rabbit-coursing is a very popular sport, swift, well-trained dogs often win large sums of money and local fame for their owners. An old Yorkshire collier, well known for his success in the coursing-field, surprised his mates a year or two ago by marrying a decidedly ugly woman. In addition to this, he was generally considered a confirmed woman-hater. 'Why has ta gone an' got spliced, lad, at thy age?' one of his cronies asked. 'It's not much of a tale,' the old man replied carelessly. 'I agree wi' ye 'at Bessie yon' is no beauty; but that dog o' mine, 'e was simply pinin' for some 'un to look after 'im while I be away at t' pit. I cud na bear to leave 'im in t' 'ouse by hissen, so I married Bessie. She ain't 'andsome, but she's mighty good company for the dog!'

Great is the dog!

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

### CHAPTER XIV.—HOW WE TRAPPED THE TRAITOR.



WE had still three hours before Colonel Lepard could arrive. There was, of course, the possibility that he had been unable to leave at once, and might not come till the following day; but we believed he would come that night, and made all our preparations accordingly.

We made Roussel comfortable in a bedroom upstairs; then we made a hearty meal in the *salon* below, and sat smoking while waiting for the arrival of our—guest.

In this state of expectancy the minutes which lay between us and the supreme moment when our plans would be put to the test, for the making and marring of more than one life, passed but slowly. As the time drew near, my heart began to thump a trifle quicker, and every nerve in my body seemed on the alert for the first sound that should tell us that the time had come.

Vaurel smoked calmly, but I have no doubt he felt much the same.

'It's time he was here,' I said at last, for the simple pleasure of breaking the oppressive silence. Vaurel grunted.

'If he's coming,' I added.

'He'll come,' said Vaurel through his pipe-stem.

Then there came a sudden preemphory rat-tat on the great hall-door, which brought us both to our feet and the blood to our heads for a moment.

'*Le voilà!*' said Vaurel. 'I will let him in. You have your revolver, Monsieur Lamont?'

I nodded.

'Then at last the play begins;' and he went out into the hall.

I heard his, 'Ah, Monsieur le Colonel, it is you! Pray give yourself the trouble to enter.' The Colonel, I could hear, had not awaited the invitation, but was already in the hall.

'You are expected in the *salon*, Monsieur le Colonel,' said Vaurel suavely, and I heard him bolting the front door; then the firm ringing step came across the flags to the room where I was standing with my back to the fire.

'*Tiens!* it is you, Monsieur Lamont?' said the Colonel as he pushed aside the draught-curtain that hung over the door.

He halted for a moment on the threshold in evident surprise. Then he came forward, tossed his *képi* on the table, and threw off his military coat. I heard the door close behind him, and knew that Vaurel stood waiting inside.

'Yes, it is I, Monsieur le Colonel,' I replied in French, and his eyes gave a blink of surprise, and then settled into a look of suspicion.

'Won't you sit down?' I said. 'I have something to say to you, and some questions to ask on behalf of Mademoiselle des Comptes.'

He frowned and sat down. The reception was not what he had expected. He did not quite know what to make of it.

'Well, monsieur, and what are your questions?' he asked gruffly.

'In the first place, mademoiselle begs you to give her all the information you can in connection with the affair of her brother Gaston.'

The dark face grew black. 'I have no information to give to mademoiselle,' he said curtly.

'I know differently, Colonel Lepard, and I intend to have that information.'

'How, monsieur! You—intend— What talk is this?'

'Listen, Colonel Lepard,' I said quietly. 'Made-moiselle left here this morning with Madame de St Ouen and Monsieur Dienfoy by my request. You are alone here with myself and Prudent Vaurel, and you don't leave this house until you have disclosed the whole matter.'

'Ten thousand furies!' he shouted, springing up and blazing out like a live shell. 'Am I crazy, or are you?'

I said nothing, and only continued to eye him steadily.

'The contract is too big for you, Monsieur—Lamont, if that be your name. If you think you can squeeze me you are very much mistaken.'

I bowed, but held my peace, which only made him the more angry.

'See here,' he said roughly, 'if you or your poacher friend attempts to lay a finger on me I'll simply blow holes in you.'

He slipped his hand inside his tunic; but my hand had only to come out of my jacket-pocket, and I was first.

'Drop that instantly,' I said, 'or I fire.'

He was a very great scoundrel, but he was no coward. He probably felt that I had more to gain from him alive than dead, whereas he had everything to gain by killing me, and absolutely nothing to lose. He had been trapped into the house; he was being subject to menace. The law would certainly hold him guiltless.

If he thought these things they passed through his brain like a flash, for his revolver spoke instantly. The flash almost blinded me, and the bullet grazed my head.

The next moment Vaurel had flung round his arms a noose with a running knot and drawn it tight, and so held him powerless.

I thought he would have had a fit. All the blood in his body seemed to rush into his head and neck till he seemed like to burst, and he fairly foamed curses.

'Gently!' said Vaurel, giving him a shake. 'Your master the devil has handed you over to our care, Monsieur le Colonel, to purge some of the evil out of you. Take my advice and don't throw away any chance that is given you.'

Vaurel jerked him down into a chair in spite of his struggles, and twisted the rest of the rope round and round him till he could not move a limb.

'Now,' said Vaurel as he straightened himself from his task, 'that's what I call a neat job.'

The Colonel cursed us with every foul oath he could lay his tongue to, and with all the passion of impotence, and we had to wait till his strength gave out to get a chance of speaking.

'Now, listen,' I said when he was fairly spent, 'and you can think over it during the night. If you put us in the way of proving the innocence

of Gaston des Comptes you go free. If you refuse we hand you over to justice for the murder of your accomplice, Captain Zuyler'— At that he was suddenly silent, and the red passion in his face gave way to a black pallor. 'We know all about it,' I continued. 'The proofs are complete, and the motive is patent. It is your life for Gaston's. Think it out, Monsieur le Colonel. I shall see you in the morning.'

Vaurel tilted the chair back on to its hind-legs and dragged it scraping and groaning along the hallway to a small pantry at the back of the house, the window of which was very small and very high up—the room where Zuyler's body had lain three days before; and not one single word did the prisoner speak during this undignified progress. He was as silent as a sack of flour, as Vaurel said. His mind seemed to have struck ground on the fact that we knew all about the murder of Captain Zuyler, and it had not yet had time to get afloat again.

So the first step in our search for information was successfully accomplished. How far ahead the last one might be we could none of us foresee. We could only take things as they came; and, at all events, it was much to have Lepard in our hands, and to have brought him face to face with our demands and with the knowledge that his own personal safety lay in complying with them. We had dug the mine and laid the train, and our prisoner was tied to the powder-barrel; and he was aware of it. The opening of his mouth in the way we wanted it would set him free. All we could do was to await the result of his meditations.

'Monsieur Lamont,' Vaurel said, 'it would be as well for Colonel Lepard to return to Rennes to-night by the late train.'

'What on earth do you mean, Vaurel?' I gasped, wondering for a moment whether something had slipped in his brain also.

'Don't you see?' he said, with his eyes dancing. 'The folks in the village and at the station saw him arrive. If they don't see him go away they will suppose him still here; and if he is unreasonable we may have to keep him some time, in which case we don't want them to think that.'

'Well?'

'Well, they must see him go away again to-night, and then they will be satisfied and won't talk. One of us must go back dressed in the Colonel's coat and *kepi*. It must be me, I think. You're too slim. I'm more of his shape; though, thank God! it's not simple fat. I'll get to the station just as the train is in; and with the hood drawn over my head, and them all half-asleep, they'll never notice. Then I'll get out at Bency as Prudent Vaurel, in my own cap and blouse, with the Colonel's things in a parcel, and I'll get back here by the road by two o'clock.'

'You think we may have to hold him some time?'

'Longer than we expected maybe, monsieur.



You see, he knows as well as we do that if we give him up that won't help us one bit in M. Gaston's affair; and he will make the most of that. I'm thinking, too, it will help us to let him starve for a bit. There's nothing takes down the spunk in a man like that quicker than an empty stomach. You'll take a look now and again at that one upstairs,' he said as he got into Colonel Lepard's big coat and put the gold-braided *képi* on his head. 'Ah! don't I look fine? I always thought I should make a better officer than most of them, and—*me voilà!*—M. le Colonel Vaurel of the General Staff!'

He turned and twisted in front of the glass as pleased as a child with his new suit; and when he drew the hood of the coat over his head and tucked his beard inside the collar, it seemed likely enough that, in the dark, and on the jump, he would pass well enough for the Colonel.

'*Bien! au revoir, monsieur!*' he saluted me in the most approved style of haughty nonchalance, and I let him out at the front door and bolted it after him.

I took a candle and went upstairs to take a look at Roussel, with Boulot padding inquisitively after me wherever I went. Then I sought out mademoiselle's pink nest, where I had talked with her the night before; and after lighting the fire I sat down in her own soft chair, and let my thoughts dwell lovingly on the charming mistress of the mansion and of my heart.

It was just about two in the morning when Vaurel's knock sounded on the door, and I was glad to see his honest face again, for there was something depressing in the feeling of being shut up in the big house with those other two, even though they were both quite harmless.

'That's all right,' he said as he dropped into a chair. 'Colonel Lepard returned to Paris by the last train last night, and old Monsieur Leflo at the station will not forget it in a hurry. *Mon dieu!* how the Colonel did swear at him for not keeping the train waiting a minute longer, although the old gentleman could not possibly have known he was coming! He came very near to missing it, and jumped in when it was on the move, and then put out his head and swore at Monsieur Leflo till the old graybeard fairly shook with anger.' Vaurel laughed heartily at the recollection of his exploit, for M. Leflo, the *chef-de-gare*, was lofty in his manners and somewhat overbearing towards his inferiors; and Vaurel had evidently greatly enjoyed getting even with him for once.

In the morning we paid a visit to our prisoner, Boulot peering between our legs, and snuffing and growling uneasily at sight of him. He certainly was a sufficiently unpleasant object. He looked limp and shrunk and broken down; but a trace of the last night's spirit rose in him as the door opened, and his face was set in a grim scowl, which showed no present sign of giving in to our demands.

'Are you prepared now to give us the information we wish, Monsieur Lepard?' I asked.

But not a word would he say, though I could see, by the clench of his jaw and the throbbing pulse in his temple, that he was bursting with wrath and kept it in with difficulty.

'When you tell us all we want to know, and we have had time to test the truth of it, you shall go free,' I said; 'until then you stop here.'

No answer came, so we turned the key on him and left him to his thoughts.

We ostentatiously tied Boulot with a stout cord to the door-handle outside, and as we went down the hall we heard him blow a warning snuffle below the door, which deepened into a snarling roar as he tore at the crack with his great front paws, and seemed to be giving back curse for curse with the man inside.

The days passed, however, and the prisoner remained as dumb to us as though he had never spoken in this world. Much as I detested him and the things he had done, I could not but marvel at, and in a certain way admire, the steadfastness of purpose which bottled up even that fount of profanity, the letting loose of which would have given him such immense relief.

'I thought he was flabbier,' said Vaurel, greatly surprised at the way he held out. 'He's a man after all. Pity he's a bad one.'

'How is it all going to end?' I asked, with no little disturbance of mind, on the seventh night of the Colonel's imprisonment; for it looked as though we might go on this way for ever.

'God knows,' said Vaurel; 'but we've got him, and we'll stick to him.'

Our other patient meanwhile was mending. He was weak and worn with his exposure, and he had a hacking cough; but he seemed coming to his right mind, and was gaining strength every day.

Our plans, however, were threatened suddenly by two outside dangers, one of which we had taken no account of, because we had not reckoned on Lepard's holding out so long; and the other it had been impossible to foresee, because no human being can forecast the eccentricities of an unbalanced brain.

One day an unusual rap came at the front door, and Vaurel, opening it, was confronted by an officer in the uniform of a captain of Chasseurs.

'Is Monsieur le Colonel Lepard staying here?' he asked.

'No, monsieur,' said Vaurel, and I could well imagine the look of vacant surprise he would put on.

'But he has been here?'

'Yes, monsieur. Monsieur le Colonel came one night about a week ago' —

'Thursday of last week?' interjected the officer.

'That was it—exactly! Thursday of last week. I remember it was Thursday, because that was the day mademoiselle left.'

'Ah!' said the officer. 'Mademoiselle left on

Thursday—did she? And where has mademoiselle gone to?’

‘To Combourg, monsieur, with Madame the Duchesse de St Ouen and Monsieur l’Abbé Dieufoy.’

‘And Colonel Lepard came here after they had left?’

‘The very same night, monsieur; and they left by the midday train.’

‘And the Colonel?’

‘Naturally, when he heard mademoiselle was gone, he went also. He returned, I understood, by the night train.’

Here Boulot and the Colonel had one of their little wrangles, and the hall resounded with snarls and yelps.

‘What is all that?’ asked the Captain.

‘My bulldog after a rat,’ said Vaurel. ‘Has monsieur made inquiries at the station?’

‘Yes; they tell me the same thing; but I was bound to ask here also. I thank you, my friend. Good-day!’

‘Good-day, Monsieur le Capitaine, and I hope you will find Monsieur le Colonel all right. He is a brave man!’ and with great enjoyment Vaurel watched the Captain return the way he had come.

It was evident that the Colonel’s disappearance was beginning to excite suspicion at headquarters, and this set us to the discussion of further plans for his safe keeping and the attainment of our end. Before we were able to arrive at any decision in the matter our anxieties were suddenly piled into heaps in another direction, when Vaurel came bounding into my room one morning before I was up, in a state of great agitation, and reported that Roussel had disappeared.

‘He is gone, monsieur!’ he cried.

‘Gone? Who? The Colonel?’ and I jumped up and began dressing in haste.

‘No, the other—the madman.’

‘But how gone, Vaurel? Where to?’

‘I left him sleeping quietly when I turned in,’ he said. ‘Now his window is open, and he is gone. He is off his head again, I expect, and has made for the woods.’

‘Has he taken his clothes with him?’

‘I did not look. I saw he was no longer there, and came to tell you at once.’

We went into Roussel’s room; and a moment’s examination showed us that he had simply got out of bed, opened the window, and scrambled down in some inexplicable way. It was evident that he had gone with no more clothing than his night-shirt.

‘I’m afraid all your care is wasted, my friend,’ I said. ‘His brain has evidently slipped again, just as we thought he was getting better.’

‘We must get help from the village and try and find him again,’ said Vaurel.

Then all the difficulties of the position suddenly flashed upon me.

‘No; that won’t do,’ I said. ‘What will they do if they catch him?’

‘*Mon dieu!* I never thought of that.’

‘They think he murdered Captain Zuyler, and if they catch him they will hand him over to justice. Then we could only set matters right by handing over the Colonel and telling all we know, and then good-bye to all our hopes.’

‘That is so,’ replied Vaurel, scratching his head helplessly. ‘I half-wish I had left him to die in the woods. He is going to upset the whole matter, curse him!’

We were greatly troubled by this unfortunate matter, which trebled all our anxieties and rendered almost futile the discussion of further plans concerning the Colonel; for they might all be blown to the winds at a moment’s notice by the capture of the madman by the villagers.

Vaurel ranged the woods all that day in search of him, but returned in a state of hopeless despondency and black anger.

‘If I come across him I’ll break his neck,’ he growled; ‘after all the care I gave him, to play us this trick.’

I persuaded him to go up to Mère Thibaud’s in the evening, for he was sure to hear there if Roussel’s escape had yet become known to the villagers.

He returned about nine o’clock, and I saw as soon as I opened the door to him that something had upset him. He was in a state of pallid anger. He had a great swollen bruise on his forehead, the blood from which had run down over his face, and for a time he could only gasp out angry oaths.

At length he explained that Roussel had been seen, or his ghost, by the miller when driving through Bessancy woods; for a thing in white jumped out from the trees, ran in front of the horse, and screamed and flung its arms about till the poor beast nearly died of fright. Juliot threatened to put a bullet through him if he came across him; although, he said, a priest and holy water was what was wanted for such a job. Vaurel had himself seen him.

‘Yes, monsieur, then I came home, and I took the short cut through the wood, and hang me if he didn’t jump out on me just the same way!—flung up his arms and gibbered and snickered, and then away through the dark. I got such a turn that I stumbled and knocked my head against a tree’—and he pointed to the big bruise on his forehead—‘and when I found my feet he was gone.’

I fear our fount of charity as regards Roussel was pretty well run dry, and we both devoutly wished he might break his neck before he knocked all our plans into a cocked hat by getting himself caught.

(To be continued.)

## A BENGALI KITE.

By R. W. K. GODWIN.



ORIENTAL methods differ considerably from those of this country even in so small a matter as the making of a kite. Naturally, environment has a deal—in this case perhaps all—to do with the matter. An English boy flies his kite in the fields, with plenty of room for a long run and plenty of energy to be spent in the enjoyment of the fun. His kite is a heavy, well-made affair, with a good long tail, and with wings or tassels on its sides. To the lathes used in its construction is attached stout twine, sometimes even string, as such a kite will take a considerable amount of holding in a good breeze. Perhaps the excitement of getting the kite to fly is the most exhilarating feature; but there is a great pleasure even to boys of a larger growth in watching the gyrations of a kite in the heavens. A good deal of science or knack, too, is necessary to be a successful kite-flyer, and much may be learnt concerning one of the greatest forces—wind—from such a simple amusement.

However, this is digressing from my subject. In the East it is all so different. As stated, environment makes itself even still more felt in the matter of the making of a Bengali kite. We do not fly our kites in the fields in Bengal; no, kite-flying must be done in a far less boisterous manner, from the coolest and most common resort, the housetops. This necessitates a kite so constructed that practically no run is wanted; it is of course necessary that the minimum of perspiration be produced. So the kite is made tailless and wingless, of tissue-paper and thin slips of bamboo, this latter material being a local growth. It is flown with cotton or thread instead of string, and will ascend in the faintest breeze.

The Bengali kite is constructed in the most characteristic listless Oriental fashion—merely a square of tissue-paper, the side of it measuring twelve, or at the most fifteen, inches in length, along one diagonal of which is gummed a very thin slip of bamboo, forming the length of the kite. From corner to corner of the width another slip of bamboo is attached, but this time bent to a semicircle formed *inside* the square. The difference in appearance from the English kite is that in the latter the semicircle is formed *outside* the square. This bent slip of bamboo is attached to the tissue-paper in the most fragile manner; it is secured merely at the corners, and only serves the purpose of keeping the tissue-paper extended flat and taut. Where the tail should commence a small square of paper is attached, just about sufficient to cause one end to be recognised from the other. The cotton is now attached

and the kite balanced so as to form a suitable resisting plane to the air. The whole often weighs less than *one ounce*.

In the evenings in Bengal a steady breeze blows inland from the bay. It is then that from the housetops the little European community in the smaller towns often amuse themselves with the sport of kite-flying; and there is sport in it, as I shall presently show. As many as a dozen of these little Bengali kites may be seen in the air at a time, of all colours, and many of them particularly coloured, giving a very pretty effect. The experts in the game would fly a tandem of, say, a red and a blue kite. The ability to do this, although requiring a little skill, may be soon acquired with practice. One kite is sent up on a couple of hundred yards of thread, then another on about a hundred yards; the two threads are then knotted together and thus connected with a single line, which may be run out several hundred yards more.

The inland breeze from the bay is so suitable, being gentle and steady, for flying the kites that no difficulty whatever is experienced in causing them to ascend; they will fly straight away from the hand, which is, of course, necessary in so confined a space as a housetop. The line may be paid out quickly, and in a few moments a considerable altitude is attained. It is remarkable, too, what a great amount of air-pressure these little Bengali kites will stand—on hauling them down, the sides of the tissue-paper will often be found serrated with the wind like a saw-edge. They will fly equally well in this country when suitable atmospheric conditions prevail, as I have often proved.

When a number of kites were flying of an evening, of course some would get in the way of others, and this started the sport. By judicious handling of a kite its line could be jockeyed across the line of another, sawing the latter through, releasing the kite, and thus removing one opponent from the field, greatly to the amusement of the remainder of the kite-fliers, and proportionately to the chagrin of its owner. Then evening after evening the discomfited one would try with a fresh kite to pay back with interest the injury he had received. This soon led to the survival of the fittest.

All cotton lines were quickly put out of the field, and thread was the order of the day. The great success of one competitor made us all suspicious that he possessed some undue advantage, and at last the secret leaked out: he had applied glass-powder to his line by means of some gummy substance. This was a trick he had probably borrowed from the Chinese, who



are adepts in kite-flying as in many other scientific amusements. For a while he was cutting our threads right and left; and, being an old hand at the flying, all the fun was for some time on his side. From the time his secret was discovered a demand sprang up in the village for thread so treated, of which the dealers were not slow in taking advantage; and we were once more on an equality.

The greatest success that fell to my lot in the game was with a kite made with half-black and half-white tissue-paper. It was a splendid flier, and from its very colour, or absence of colour, could be distinguished a great distance off. After bringing down a couple of opponents, it became known as the 'Pirate,' and accordingly received a great deal of attention from all coloured kites, which might aptly be described in such a connection as 'flags of all nationalities.'

For several evenings in succession the 'Pirate' promptly tackled all challengers, and indeed for a whole week seemed invincible. But as all champions must have their day and all records go by the board, one evening the 'Pirate' was successfully engaged by a red kite; and as my

line was severed, and the good old 'Pirate' floated away in the distance, a yell of exultation was raised by all the occupants of the neighbouring housetops. The 'Pirate' had brought down five of his kind; and though I made and flew many other black-and-white Bengali kites, I never succeeded in building another 'Pirate.'

If by these few notes I have raised any interest in what is certainly the good fresh-air fun of kite-flying, I shall be gratified. There are numerous forms of kites besides the ordinary English pattern; in fact, many varieties of box-kites may be obtained commercially in this country. That the latter should have been thought of sufficient importance to be patented in many countries shows that kite-flying is on the increase as an amusement; and the art has now been taken regularly into the service of meteorological science. Special kinds and combinations of kites have been invented for the purpose, and are equipped with automatic recording thermometers, barometers, &c. In 1900 it was reported that a box-kite had safely returned, with its records, from a height of 14,000 feet.

## THE BISHOP AND THE CONSTABLE.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER IV.

**F**OR a few minutes the room in which the events already described had taken place remained empty, the silence broken only by the whistling of birds in the garden and the shouts and laughter of light-hearted youths and maids as the boats went by on the river. Then Helen and Katie came hurriedly in again, glanced anxiously round the room and out of the window, and finding no sign of either of the unfortunate young men, gazed at each other in despair. Even the usually irrepressible and energetic Katie felt helpless in the face of the absurd, but in their eyes anything but laughable, complications in which they had so suddenly and unexpectedly become involved. If they had simply been spectators of what had taken place—if Frank and Arthur had been total strangers to them—no doubt Jewson's arbitrary proceedings would have been a source of infinite amusement to them; but, as it was, not a smile illumined their pale and tearful countenances. Utterly ignorant of legal formalities, they conjured up dreadful visions of what might happen to Frank and Arthur before they could effect their release, in which handcuffs, treadmills, and unsightly garments marked with the broad-arrow played a prominent part.

'If I have to endure this suspense much longer,' exclaimed Katie, 'I shall go crazy—I know I shall. If I were only a man I could

do something; but as it is I have to sit still and drink tea when I feel as if I could—oh! I don't know what.'

Helen, whose naturally sweet temper was beginning to be soured at the thought of Arthur immured in a cell at the police station, eyed her coldly.

'Things wouldn't have been half so bad,' she said, 'if you'd only let Arthur explain everything at first.'

'Wouldn't they?' exclaimed Katie, who was now exasperated beyond endurance. 'Then I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll explain everything now. I'll tell the Bishop everything from beginning to end. There's nothing else to do, and I'll do it.'

Unprepared for such very decided action, Helen feebly attempted to expostulate; but Katie waved her aside and energetically pulled the bell.

'These people are stone-deaf,' she exclaimed when no one appeared, and she rang it again more violently than before.

Mary opened the door with no very amiable expression on her usually pleasant face.

'Did you ring?' she asked sharply.

'I should think I did ring,' retorted Katie. 'Be good enough to inform the Bishop that I very particularly wish to speak to him for a moment.'

'Well, you can't speak to him,' answered Mary pertly.

'What do you mean, girl?' exclaimed Katie indignantly. 'Where is the Bishop? I shall go to him myself.'

'Well, if you'll take my advice, you'll be off before you get into trouble. That's what the missis told me to say—"Tell them to be off before they get into trouble."'

Katie flushed crimson at the girl's impudent tone.

'What do you mean by this outrageous insolence?' she exclaimed. 'Where is the Bishop?'

'He's in the lock-up; that's where he is,' retorted Mary, 'or on the way to it.'

'The Bishop in the lock-up!' cried the horror-stricken girls.

'Yes; he's took up on a charge of obtaining money under false pretences. There was a mistake about the other gentlemen. They've been let out, and he's took up.'

Overwhelmed with consternation, the girls stared at each other with white, scared faces.

'Oh dear, this is simply frightful!' said Katie at last. 'Whatever shall we do?'

'There is only one thing we can do now,' almost sobbed Helen. 'Whatever the result may be, we must go to him at once and tell him the whole truth. Oh! I wish—I do wish—we'd done it at first. Come at once, Katie. Perhaps we can overtake him before he gets to the police station.'

'Yes, yes,' said Katie, 'let us go—let us go at once.'

But before they reached the door Arthur and Frank, once more clothed in their own costumes, stepped in through the window with somewhat sheepish and embarrassed countenances, urged by the laudable intention of explaining everything to the Bishop. The girls shrank away from them.

'Go away,' cried Katie. 'Don't speak to us. Go away. You—you don't know what you've done.'

'Yes, yes, go away,' exclaimed Helen; 'we never want to see you again.'

'Eh—what? Why, what's the matter?' asked Ambrose. 'Where's the Bishop?'

'We're going to him now,' answered Katie, 'and you'd better go away at once. I—I don't know what he'll say or do.'

'But where is he?' cried Ambrose impatiently. 'Why can't you tell us where he is?—Here, you, girl—what's your name?—Mary, where's the Bishop?'

'He's at the police station,' answered Mary promptly; 'that's where he is, or on the way to it. He's took up.'

'Took up!' echoed the horrified young men.

'Yes,' sobbed Katie; 'a bishop taken up on a charge of obtaining money under false pretences. It's—it's simply dreadful.'

'Good heavens!' murmured Arthur, wiping the perspiration from his brow. 'This is positively tragic. You see what a mess your silly trick has got us into, Frank.'

'If you'd shown a little common-sense we should never have got into a mess at all,' an-

swered Ambrose irritably. 'Just one word of explanation would have put a stop to all these preposterous complications. Why couldn't you have told the Bishop the truth at once?'

'Well, upon my word, that is pretty cool,' exclaimed Arthur indignantly. 'Why, man alive! it was entirely for your sake that I didn't explain things to the Bishop.'

'Well, as it turns out now it would have been much better for both of us if you had done so,' retorted Ambrose.

'Of course it would,' said Katie emphatically, 'because it'll all have to come out now—every bit of it. You might have foreseen that we should have to explain everything sooner or later.'

Arthur stared, opened his mouth and shut it again, and continued to gaze at them in speechless astonishment.

'Yes, it'll come out now, sure enough,' continued Ambrose. 'That ass of a bobby has got our names and addresses, and he's certain to show them to the Bishop. Look here, Arthur, we'd better bolt. I can't face it out.'

'But what about the Bishop?' exclaimed Arthur, finding his tongue at last. 'We can't leave him in the clutches of that thick-headed constable.'

'Pooh! The Bishop can take care of himself. He'll just prove his identity, and be back here in five minutes.'

But Arthur was no longer disposed to follow meekly in Ambrose's footsteps. Like the proverbial worm, he began to turn.

'Well, I think we ought to stop and face it out,' he rejoined decidedly. 'It's the straightforward thing to do, and I'm going to do it. What do you say, Helen?'

'I certainly think you ought to do so,' replied Helen.

'I don't agree with you,' said Ambrose. 'I think it would be much better to wait until he cools down and begins to laugh at the whole thing. It's impossible that he can take it seriously when he's had time to think it over. What do you say, Katie?'

'Oh, do what you like,' replied Katie despairingly. 'That letter hasn't been posted, and I'm perfectly sure never will be. What does it matter about anything else?'

'Pooh! It's no use being too tragic about the business,' rejoined Ambrose. 'We've just got into a scrape, and we'll have to make the best of it. After all, I don't mind having it out with the Bishop if you think it better.'

'Well, you'll have to whether you like or not,' said Arthur, who was glancing out of the window, 'because he's here.'

Ambrose turned hurriedly towards the door as if contemplating flight a second time, but thought better of it, and wheeled round again to confront the stately figure of the Bishop, who entered through the window, followed by the downcast Jewson. For a moment he stood grimly eyeing

the flushed and embarrassed countenances of the young men and women who stood before him like so many naughty children about to be reprimanded by a justly incensed schoolmaster.

'Ah!' he said at length, 'you did not expect to see me so soon, I presume. Now, permit me to say that I know everything, and you may therefore spare yourselves any embarrassing explanations. I may add that a telegram has just arrived to say that the real impostor is in custody.'

He turned to Arthur and held out his hand.

'Mr Dale,' he said, 'I am a man of few words; and when I do speak I like to speak plainly and to the point. I have done you an injustice, and I wish to acknowledge it at once. Your conduct throughout this affair has been that of a chivalrous and honourable gentleman. I knew your poor father at college, and I know you very well by report. I am also aware,' he added, with a twinkle in his eye, 'of other circumstances of which I am supposed to be ignorant. I shall be pleased if you will dine with me this evening.'

'Oh, my lord!' stammered Arthur gratefully, as the Bishop shook him warmly by the hand, and Helen, blushing rosily, glanced at him shyly.

The Bishop turned to Ambrose, and produced the still unstamped letter from his pocket, while Katie and the curate eyed him apprehensively.

'You see this letter, Ambrose?' he asked.

'Yes, my lord.'

'You are aware of the nature of its contents?'

'Yes, my lord.'

'I was about to post it as soon as I had procured a stamp. I have changed my mind.'

He deliberately tore it up and threw the fragments into the fireplace.

'Oh, my lord!' exclaimed poor Katie, while Ambrose gazed ruefully at the torn letter.

His lordship's eyes, hitherto somewhat grim and stern, began to twinkle pleasantly, and he smiled on both of them benignly.

'I may say that your boyish escapade has nothing to do with the matter,' he said to Ambrose. 'Ten minutes ago I saw an announcement in to-day's paper which suggested it. Possibly—of course I am not sure—but possibly that letter on the mantelpiece, addressed to yourself, contains some further information. You had better read it, I think.'

Ambrose immediately pounced on the letter and tore it open, while the others watched him in breathless suspense.

'Oh, this is too good!' he exclaimed excitedly.

'I say, what do you think—eh?'

'What? What?' they chorussed.

'Why, Jenkins—dear old Jenkins, bless him!—is—married.'

'Married?'

'Yes, married a wealthy wife—and—and resigned, so that I'm practically the Rector of Westbeach.'

In that supreme moment Katie forgot the respect due to a dignitary of the Church, and leaping on a chair waved her hand in the air.

'Three cheers for Jenkins!' she cried. 'Hurrah!'

Carried away by her enthusiasm, the rest joined in, and then suddenly stopped and looked guiltily at the Bishop. But his lordship regarded her with a fatherly smile.

'Ah, youth, youth!' said he. 'You young people almost make me wish that I were a boy again. We'd better drive back at once and all dine together.'

To this arrangement every one joyfully agreed; but as they were going out Jewson approached the Bishop.

'I hope, your lordship—if you'll excuse me, your lordship—won't say more about this little affair than you can help, your lordship,' said he.

The Bishop regarded him with twinkling eyes. 'Experience of the world has taught me, my good man,' he rejoined, 'that we are none of us infallible, not even the police. I hope this little adventure will teach you the same lesson. I shall say nothing to prejudice you with your superiors.'

'Thank you, my lord,' said Jewson, and drew back with a salute.

A few minutes later, with Mary at his elbow, he stood watching the carriage bowling rapidly away along the sunlit road.

'Ah, Joe!' said Mary, with a mournful shake of the head, 'it didn't come off, you see.'

'Not this time, Mary,' said the crestfallen constable; 'but just you wait a bit, my girl—just you wait a bit.'

## UNDERCURRENTS OF MANX LIFE.



POPULAR as the toy kingdom of the Isle of Man has become as a holiday resort, it remains in some respects nearly as much a *terra incognita* as it was thirty years ago.

People visit it, admire its scenery, do the show-places with more or less thoroughness; but they rarely get below the surface of

Manx life at any point, and never see wherein it differs from that of the 'continent'—or, to employ more familiar and correct phraseology, England, Scotland, and Wales. The native almost invariably uses that word in speaking of the mainland, as if it were alien soil, though, of course, Mona's Isle is really the pivot of Great Britain, if it forms no part of it.



What little the average visitor to the island does glean of its peculiarities is often to his disadvantage. As the new-fledged M.P. learns the rules of the House of Commons by breaking them, so the holiday-maker becomes versed in some Manx laws by unwittingly infringing them. If he is accompanied by his dog, it is probable that he will be summoned because, being ignorant that the license he possesses has no force in the island, he has not taken out a Manx license. Much to their amazement and disgust, visitors have been called upon to appear at the High Bailiff's Court to answer for this offence, and have been fined a nominal sum. Occasionally even people settled in Douglas never discover that they are law-breakers in this matter till a zealous constable calls them to account. Then they are taught a lesson in geography.

Should the impecunious visitor try to evade his liabilities, he will find out something more about local law; he will discover that he can be detained as security. Any person, other than a native-born Manxman, attempting to leave the island without first paying debts incurred there can be imprisoned till he pays or comes to a satisfactory arrangement with his creditor—a method of dealing with defaulters which is absolutely necessary for the protection of the hotel and boarding-house keepers. Numbers of visitors spend money so recklessly that they have not sufficient to meet their bills; and instead of frankly explaining their position, they sometimes seek for a surreptitious means of escape. As there are no pawnshops in the island, their only course is flight. Some succeed in getting clear away, and are never heard of again; others are traced and proceeded against through the county court; but as a small amount is not worth the trouble, even if the address of the debtor is known, it is only when the sum is large that the creditor comes to England and prosecutes his claim. Other runaways are pounced upon just as they are pluming themselves on their smartness—when, in fact, they are on board the steamer; and, humiliated and crestfallen, with hundreds of curious eyes turned upon them, they are taken into custody. Visitors of the 'bilking' type thus prolong their stay in the island beyond the time they had fixed upon for departure.

In the same way the Manx take care to keep with them other persons who would show them a clean pair of heels. They have the power of detaining employés and others who have not fulfilled their legal obligations. On receiving her wages, a servant in a Douglas hotel told her master that she was bent on returning to Liverpool next day. To this the caterer replied that, as it was the height of the season, he must insist upon a month's notice, according to agreement. Then the maid, after the manner of certain of her kind, became insolent, defied her employer, and ended by stating that she would sail by the early boat in the morning at all costs. The hotelkeeper thereupon procured a detention order; and as a

result the woman was arrested on the steamer and brought ashore, where the police explained to her that she would either have to serve a month's notice or return the money she had received on the previous day. Having vindicated his authority, however, the hotelkeeper was content to waive his rights. 'You can go now that I have taught you a lesson,' he said to the chagrined domestic.

If the islanders prevent some people from leaving them, they are not less firm in banishing others who wish to stay. Minor offenders are sometimes liberated on condition that they remove themselves with all speed to England, just as our rural justices, with an eye to economy, are prone to pardon begging and other venial offences on the prisoners promising to go elsewhere forthwith. Paupers from the United Kingdom are got rid of in a similar manner. They may be chargeable to the Manx authorities for a day or two, but they are quickly put on a luggage-boat and cast back into England. Expulsion is carried out so expeditiously that in many cases the labour-test is not applied. It is found to be more convenient and more economical to dispense with that formality than to insist upon it.

In the matter of taxation the toy kingdom is as unique as in its defence of its own interests. There is no income-tax, no succession-duties chargeable against the estates of deceased persons, no highway or turnpike tolls. Roads are maintained by the revenue from two sources: a small tax upon every wheel and shod hoof, and a levy upon every male inhabitant, who must give a day's work on the road or its equivalent in cash. The Manx know nothing of stamp-duties on receipts, cheques, promissory notes, &c., so these contribute nothing to the revenue. In fact, stamps are used for postage only. Happy—thrice happy— islanders!

The immunity of the Manx community from the imposts under which we groan is, of course, only possible because they, as essentially a home-ruled community, enact their own laws. While in important fiscal and other matters the Manx legislature keeps closely in touch with Westminster, following with Bills similar to those passed by the imperial parliament, it ignores many statutes and promulgates others on its own initiative. Thus local law differs in many respects from that of Great Britain. Besides the Acts affecting taxation, there are statutes relative to land and other property practically unknown in our courts. Open voting still prevails at Manx elections; but, on the other hand, the House of Keys has extended the franchise to women. In Mona's Isle, too, as in some parts of America and in Australia, a publican can be punished for selling intoxicating liquor to a 'known' drunkard. By that term is meant a man who, having been convicted for drunkenness three times within the year, has been inhibited from purchasing alcoholic beverages for

twelve months; and the publican is liable to a penalty of ten pounds for serving such a man. This is a check on habitual tipplers in the rural parts of the island; but in the towns these men easily evade recognition. It is generally acknowledged that the working of the Act is not quite satisfactory. The Chief Constable has pointed out that there is nothing to prevent declared inebriates from sending for drink.

One of the most singular of Manx laws is directed against the operations of insular Isaac Gordons. So far back as the year 1691 the Tynwald passed an Act forbidding the exaction of more than 6 per cent. interest per annum on loans. It provided, further, that any bond, contract, or the like stipulating a higher rate of interest should be 'utterly void,' and that any persons doing anything contrary 'to the tenour or meaning' of the statute should forfeit and lose treble the value of the 'moneys, wares, merchandises, or other things so lent, bargained, sold, or exchanged'—a most comprehensive and effective enactment of the seventeenth century Manx legislature. If this is not a sufficient check on the practices of the unscrupulous usurer, where will you find a better one? It is still in force, having proved so useful as a safeguard that it has never been repealed or even materially altered.

The laws of the toy kingdom are no less thorough in protecting the public against loss in holding paper-money, which is issued in one-pound notes. Before a bank is permitted to issue its notes a license, which costs twenty pounds per annum, is required; and for every issue it must deposit in the hands of trustees appointed by the Governor and the Council security to the face value, that payment may be assured. Each note is, therefore, practically guaranteed by the Government. Once notes are issued, they circulate for a number of years, and have not the short life of the crisp slips honoured by the Old Lady of Threadneedle Street. A Manx note is a thing to be picked up with the tongs if microbes have any terrors for you. It tells its own history, which, as in the case of Russian paper-money, can be gleaned from its smell. Some of the Manx, however, recently showed that they were either ignorant or had forgotten that the local notes are safe. When Dumbell's Bank suspended payment there was a wild rush to cash its notes similar to that which took place, with more reason, after the disastrous failure of the City of Glasgow Bank. The scare was quite unnecessary; and an Englishman who happened to be in a rural part of the island knew it. Happening to have a large sum of gold in his possession, he bought up all the notes he could get at a discount, and netted a handsome profit on the transaction. For once the Manx were caught napping.

In bygone years the people of the toy kingdom

in the Irish Sea had their own customs and superstitions; but these are now almost extinct, like their language. You may still see a straw broken to clinch a bargain. The fishermen, again, cherish all manner of strange beliefs—for instance, that the third boat going out of harbour is sure to be unlucky; and, as a consequence, there is no third boat, for, after the first and second lead the way, a number follow abreast, keeping as nearly as possible in line. The Manx, moreover, have lost little of their intense clannishness, which betrays itself in many ways; notably they are addicted to intermarrying, which is largely responsible for the insanity occurring in the island.

Notwithstanding all this, the inhabitants of Manxland—at all events such of them as live in the towns—are yearly approximating more closely in modes of thought and in habits to those 'foreigners' whose housing and feeding in the summer months constitute their chief industry. It is mainly these peaceful invaders who have wrought the change, though the English who have taken up residence in the island have doubtless been a potent factor. Of late years a goodly number of immigrants have deliberately settled in Manxland, permanently to enjoy its scenery and its bracing, ozone-laden air. I say 'deliberately,' because people have been known to pitch their tents in the island more by chance than of set purpose. A rough passage—that and nothing more—has led to their abandoning England for ever. They have left Liverpool or Fleetwood or Belfast with the intention of merely paying the Isle of Man a visit; but they have suffered so horribly from *mal de mer* on the voyage that they have been more dead than alive on reaching Douglas, and have there and then registered a vow never to return. A few of such faint-hearted folk are still in Manxland, and there they will remain to the end of the chapter. There is another reason why the apparently superfluous qualification 'deliberately' is necessary. It is that the island has been, and occasionally is still, used as a place of exile. Some years ago the 'remittance man' was as well known, under another name, in Douglas as he is in the colonies. A number of unruly, spendthrift sons were in the town, each forbidden to set foot in England on pain of having his allowance cut off. But, of course, the involuntary English residents are greatly outnumbered by those who live in the little kingdom from considerations of health.

As the more desirable class of inhabitants increases and the island is brought more and more into touch with this country, other changes will inevitably take place in Manx life. The changes will be slow and gradual, for conservatism is one of the leading traits of the native character; but come they must in the natural order of things.

## THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

## ANTARCTIC EXPLORATION.



HE paper recently read before the Royal Geographical Society by Mr Borchgrevink, on 'The Result of Sir George Newnes's Antarctic Expedition,' was full of interest to an audience which was in full sympathy with the lecturer. The ship *Southern Cross*, which carried the expedition southwards, first struck the ice-pack on 30th December 1898, and on 1st March the Union-jack was formally hoisted on Victoria Land. The vessel then returned to New Zealand, leaving ten adventurous spirits behind—the first human beings who had ever attempted to winter on Antarctic land. Many valuable observations and collections were made at constant risk to life and limb, both men and dogs suffering severely from frost-bite. The scenery is of the most awful and impressive character, the cliffs rising in many places to thousands of feet in height. Heavy gales were common. There are no bears, foxes, musk-oxen, or reindeer, such as are met with in Arctic regions; and for this reason the food-stores had to be quadrupled. Numerous sledge-journeys were made, and in one of these the farthest point south ever reached by man was achieved. Mr Borchgrevink strongly advises the employment of plenty of dogs in similar expeditions, not only on account of their practical use, but also because they are such companionable beasts, and help men to forget the engrossing troubles of the moment.

## A REMEDY FOR DEAR GAS.

When the price of coal goes up it is only natural that the price of illuminating gas which is made from it should rise in sympathy with it; and although we cannot expect the gas companies to work at a loss, there is evidence that some of them at least are not too generous to their customers. No one has yet solved the problem why London gas on one side of the Thames should be sold at about 25 per cent. more than gas of a similar quality on the other side of the river. As a corrective to serious complaints constantly being raised against the present state of things, Professor Silvanus Thompson has recently proposed a drastic remedy. He points out that a non-illuminating gas, giving a blue flame like a spirit-lamp, can be manufactured at about half the cost of ordinary household gas. This gas is equally efficient for heating and cooking purposes, and can be used for driving gas-engines; more than this, it will render the Welsbach mantle incandescent, and can be made luminous for ordinary gas-jets by the addition of albo-carbon.

Professor Thompson recommends those interested in London industrial enterprises to start factories for the manufacture of this non-luminous gas, and says that there could not be any effective opposition from the existing companies, as their monopoly only extends to the supply of illuminating gas.

## ARTIFICIAL DIAMONDS.

Among the many who have sought to solve the problem of producing artificial diamonds the name of M. Moissan stands out prominently; and although the gems he produces are barely one-fiftieth of an inch in diameter, they are veritable crystals of carbon. The method he adopts is to saturate molten iron with carbon, and then to suddenly cool the metal, with the result that it forms nodules with a jacket of chilled iron, the contents being subjected by the strain to enormous pressure. The metal is then slowly dissolved away by chemical means, and the tiny crystals of carbon—diamonds—remain. In a note recently brought before the Royal Society of Edinburgh by Dr R. Sydney Marsden, the writer calls attention to the fact that he read a paper before that society ten years ago describing a similar process for producing diamonds, and he naturally complains that in the wide publication given to M. Moissan's experiments his own claims to priority are ignored.

## PETROLEUM FOR LOCOMOTIVES.

The great rise in the price of coal will have the effect of calling attention once more to the use of liquid fuel for steam-raising, and all information as to what is being done in this direction becomes a matter of pressing interest. On many of the Russian lines of railway petroleum products are being used with good results. The first consideration is that the combustion of the naphtha employed should take place without any appreciable residue; the compound should be of a greenish colour, with a boiling-point not below 140 degrees centigrade. Cisterns containing the naphtha are placed at certain stations on the lines, and the locomotives store under the water-tank of the tender what is required for a run. Metallic filters are placed in the cisterns and reservoirs to keep out sand and foreign substances.

## THE CUCKOO AND ITS EGG.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the cuckoo deposits its egg in the nest of some bird which it selects to play the rôle of foster-mother; but hitherto it has been a moot question how the cuckoo conveys the egg to the nest. It has been generally supposed that the bird carries it in its



beak, and several observers have stated that they have seen the egg so carried. In the June number of the *Zoologist*, Mr A. H. Meiklejohn states how he was fortunate enough to be a witness of the entire transaction, and he is of opinion that the throat of the bird carries the egg. He states that the cuckoo which formed the subject of his observation was constantly opening her mouth during a preliminary encounter with the robins whose nest she assailed. He is certain that the egg could not have been laid in the ordinary way in the nest, and that the throat of the cuckoo presented a slightly distended appearance, which might well have been due to the presence of the egg.

#### ARMoured TRACTION-TRAIN.

The great change which has been effected during late years in the methods of warfare could not be better illustrated than by the recent successful trials of an armoured traction-train—that is to say, a train of bullet-proof trucks carrying howitzers and field-pieces drawn by a similarly protected traction-engine. Among the many useful lessons taught by the war in the Transvaal is the necessity for mobility, not only in the case of troops, but of heavy guns; and the armoured train is intended to take the place of those huge but unwieldy and slow teams of bullocks which enabled the Boers to so readily move their big guns from place to place. The British armoured train has been constructed by Messrs Fowler & Co., of Leeds, to the requirements of the War Department. It consists of a special road-locomotive with three trucks, the engine being of seventy-five brake-horse-power. The armour on both engine and trucks consists of half-inch nickel-steel plates manufactured by the secret process of Messrs Cannell, of Sheffield, which has already been noted in these columns. It is considered by experts that this armoured train, which is capable of operating quite independently of a railroad, is a very great advance in military science. It is destined for South Africa; but probably by the time it arrives at the front the need for its employment will happily have ceased.

#### SPIRIT FOR LIGHT LOCOMOTIVES.

Now that horseless vehicles are becoming comparatively common in our thoroughfares—although we are still far behind our French neighbours in recognising their undoubted advantages—it is very necessary to call attention to the dangers arising from the careless handling of the more volatile descriptions of petroleum employed in their engines. The vapour given off by these liquids is of such an inflammable nature that it is not safe to pour it from one vessel to another by artificial light or within several yards of a fire. For the same reason the containing vessels must be thoroughly sound and properly closed,

so as to prevent any chance of leakage. In view of the damages which may arise from ignorance concerning the nature of these volatile liquids, the Home Secretary has recently issued certain regulations, dated April 26, 1900, made by the Secretary of State under section 5 of the Locomotives on Highways Act, 1896.

#### THE ECLIPSE SHADOW-BANDS.

The occurrence of a solar eclipse has once more called attention to that strange appearance which is known as 'the shadow-bands.' These are ripple-like bands which are seen to chase one another across the surface of the earth a few minutes before and just after totality. The appearance has always aroused much interest; but no definite explanation of the phenomenon has as yet been formulated. One of the best theories which we have noted is that of a correspondent of the *Scientific American*, who paid special attention to this question when observing the recent eclipse, and was able to watch the shadow-bands as they traversed a broad level path of white sand. He says that the bands—or 'shadow-lines,' as he prefers to call them—are similar to the shadows which would appear on the bottom of a shallow pool of water when the wind ruffled its surface. They were six or eight inches apart; and he attributes their appearance to the passage of the moon's shadow causing an undulating motion in the atmosphere close to the earth's surface—that is, 'to the undulations of a stratum of heated air passing directly over our heads.' He further notes that the cold at the time was distinctly perceptible, and that his party had to resort to wraps.

#### ATMOSPHERIC RESISTANCE TO LOCOMOTION.

It was long ago computed that the greatest hindrance to the progress of a railway train at all velocities exceeding forty miles an hour was the resistance of the atmosphere, and yet nothing has been done to minimise this loss of speed. There was a rumour some years ago of locomotive engines being built in France with pointed ends; but we have heard nothing of them since. Experiments are, however, now in progress on the Baltimore and Ohio Railway with a sheathed train—that is to say, a train built so that all projections which serve to hold the air are removed, the ends of the cars covered, and the whole train representing one sinuous body with smooth sides. Very remarkable results have been attained with this train, which cleaves its way through the resisting air much as a fish rushes rapidly through the water.

Another improvement is indicated on the new Central (electric) Railway, which bores its way eighty feet below the principal streets. The line dips between each of the stations, so that the train starts more easily from one station and can pull up more easily at the next.

This arrangement is said to give a considerable economy of electric current.

#### DUST.

What is called 'dust' in London is really domestic refuse of all kinds, and has long been a source of difficulty and anxiety to the local authorities. Time was when it was eagerly sought after by the farmers of the home counties, who were willing to pay for it and remove it at their own cost. But the land became so surfeited with it that it could only be removed at the cost of the local authorities, and too often it was deposited on vacant land in the Metropolis, which in process of time became 'eligible building sites.' Thus, the 'dust' of one generation became the grave of another; for of course fevers became common in these dust-infected localities, and a pestilence would soon have arisen if the practice had been continued. By-and-by the Dust Destructor came to the aid of the sanitary reformer, although its adoption was by no means so rapid as might have been expected. People objected to the smoke, and especially to the fumes; and destructors situated on the edge of one parish were charged with polluting the atmosphere of adjoining parishes. Dust destruction is really cremation, and it has been reserved for the East End parish of Shoreditch to prove that destruction and construction may go forward together, the one being the outcome of the other. In this parish, where upwards of twenty-six thousand tons of refuse have to be consumed in a year, the heat produced by the crematory process is used to generate steam in boilers attached to the destructor, and this steam is used to drive the electric light and power machinery. It is also used for clothes-washing purposes, in the public baths and wash-houses, and exhaust-steam is also supplied to the baths and free library, which are entirely heated from the steam raised by the refuse destructor. The average cost of burning the refuse during the second year of working, including wages, was practically two shillings and sevenpence per ton, and the amount of electric energy absorbed in dealing with the refuse, including electric fans, lifts, trucks, and lighting, was 4.98 Board of Trade units per ton per annum. The total amount of energy sold by meter to consumers was 1,031,348 Board of Trade units, including 131,140 units supplied to the destructor itself; and the coal consumed amounted to 1344 tons, of the value of one thousand three hundred and eight pounds. The item of cost per ton for interest and redemption of land and plant is worked out at practically one shilling per ton. The clinker residue, which amounts to 32 per cent., is suitable for making mortar-concrete, and, when ground and mixed with Portland cement, makes excellent paving slabs. Altogether, this is a very interesting and instructive experiment; and it has been reserved for one of the

poorest parishes in London to set an example of thrift to its richer and more powerful neighbours throughout the Metropolis, and in fact throughout the kingdom.

#### PHONOGRAPHIC RECORDS.

It is now nearly twenty years since Edison startled the world with his wonderful talking-machine, the phonograph; and great were the anticipations aroused as to its future possibilities. We were to have preserved to us for all time the dulcet notes of our public singers, and the speeches of our great men were to remain with us long after they were themselves gone down into silence. Possibly some day the instrument may be so improved that it will give us something more than caricatures of the sounds it has registered on its waxen cylinder, but at present it remains little more than a splendid scientific toy. The Vienna Academy of Science evidently views the matter in a far more optimistic spirit, and is forming a collection of phonographic records for the benefit of posterity. Speech, both cultured and plebeian, is to be preserved in this way, and the voices of singers and the playing of different musical instruments are also to be recorded. We fear that under the present conditions posterity will get but a blurred outline of the sounds which commended themselves to their forefathers.

#### MEMORIALS OF LONDON.

At a meeting of the Committee for the Survey of the Memorials of Greater London, the valuable work of which is recognised by the London County Council, an account of the progress made in collecting drawings, &c., descriptive of the Metropolitan area as it used to be was given. Three volumes, descriptive of as many outlying parishes, are in progress of publication, and they contain a vast amount of interesting historical references. On behalf of the committee a statement was read as to the terrible destruction which had been wrought in the Metropolitan area within the last few years in order to make room for modern buildings and new streets. A great deal of that destruction was of course necessary; but there have been many instances in which beautifully designed buildings have been removed which might have been spared had their value been appreciated. It is one of the objects of this committee to prevent such wanton destruction in the future.

#### 'THE FATHER OF RAILWAYS.'

As George Stephenson never contradicted those who styled him, during his lifetime, 'the Father of Railways,' it has lately been asserted that he had tacitly permitted an injustice to the memory of William James, a great, if unfortunate, railway projector and pioneer.

William James, who was born at Henley-in-Arden,

Warwickshire, in 1771, became a successful solicitor worth one hundred and fifty thousand pounds; and he at one time earned ten thousand pounds a year by his practice. Having projected and surveyed over a dozen railways, including the Manchester and Liverpool Railway, principally at his own expense, his affairs fell into confusion; and he died at Bodmin, in 1837, leaving a family unprovided for. Lately it was proposed to erect a monument to the memory of Mr James, of whom Robert Stephenson—more generous than his father—wrote to Mr James's eldest son in 1844: 'I believe your late father was the original projector of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway.' The subject is fully dealt with in the *Railway Magazine* for July and October 1899, and for May 1900. It is there stated that when George Stephenson was a lad of eighteen, beginning his education, James was already laying out plans for railroads. In 1821 James paid a visit to Killingworth, and saw Stephenson's steam locomotive engine, the possibilities of which so impressed him that he entered into a kind of partnership with Stephenson in 1815 and 1816; James on his part promised to give his assistance in using Stephenson's locomotives in all districts where he had influence. Although the route surveyed by James was not that adopted for the Manchester and Liverpool Railway, which was taken up and completed by George Stephenson, there seems no reason to doubt he earned and deserved the title of 'Father of Railways' in this country.

A grandson of William James—Mr H. B. James, 69 Victoria Street, S.W.—is well known in the railway and engineering world as a contractor and engineer, and has had a varied and successful career. He was responsible for the construction of the sea-defences at Cleethorpe and the marine works at Hythe, and other important undertakings.

#### A GREAT ELECTRIC CRANE.

A crane, said to be the most powerful in the world operated by electricity, with a maximum lifting-power of one hundred and fifty tons, has recently been built by the engineers of the Newport News Shipbuilding Company, Va., and is used in the construction of warships at that port. The crane is composed of a steel framework forming a tower carried on pile foundations. The revolving portion of the crane carries all the motors and machinery required for the various movements, as well as weights required to balance the tilting tendency of the jib. The circular movement is effected by two pinion wheels, which engage with a rack fixed to the framework. These pinion wheels are driven by separate electric motors, each capable of developing twenty horse-power. One revolution of the crane describes the circumference of a circle two hundred and seven feet in diameter; but when the jib of the crane is at its highest point a circle of eighty-eight

feet in diameter is covered, thus permitting the crane to lift weights lying within these dimensions. The maximum weight of one hundred and fifty tons can only be handled within a circle whose maximum and minimum diameters are one hundred and forty-seven feet and eighty-eight feet respectively; but weights of seventy tons and under may be handled throughout the entire range of the crane's operation.

#### MELTING IRON.

At the Edison Laboratory, New York, recently, an interesting experiment, in which a piece of iron was melted in five seconds, was successfully performed by a German, Louis Drefus, the agent of Goldschmidt's Chemische Thermo Industrie of Essen. By the method demonstrated by Herr Drefus great heat is obtained in an incredibly short time by the combustion of a chemical compound, the constituents of which are not disclosed by the inventor. A small quantity of the chemical compound was placed in a crucible and covered with a little powdered aluminium; a piece of metal about half-an-inch thick and six inches long was thrust into the crucible; and when the compound was ignited the mixture blazed up furiously, and in five seconds the metal was melted. It is estimated that the heat developed in the process was three thousand degrees centigrade—a temperature hitherto unattainable. The process is expected to be of great value, and a tube company is endeavouring to secure the right to use it for welding together the ends of tubes.

#### TWO LITTLE BOOKS.

Two little books are mine to read—

Two wondrous volumes wise;

Two books alone are all I need

To read with loving eyes.

So beauteous are they to behold,

And unadorned by art;

Sweet Nature fringed their lids with gold,

The title-page—a heart.

Two little books are mine to read;

But two books make me wise.

Two books alone are all I need:

My dearest loved one's eyes.

C. INNISS BOWEN.

#### \*\* TO CONTRIBUTORS.


1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3rd. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.

4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.





# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### THE MOORISH TREASURE.

By Captain CECIL NORTH.

#### CHAPTER I.

**P**AST Ushant, and across that much-maligned bay, 'The Bay o' Biscuits' of Tommy Atkins; past Finis-terre and the Berlins Islands, sunny little chips off the Portuguese coast; past St Vincent and Trafalgar, the capes of glorious memories; and then, where the great Atlantic rollers, their long eastward journey over, fling themselves, impetuous woers, on the gently-heaving bosom of the Mediterranean Sea, to lose their might and die in the soft smother of her blue caress—at this trysting-place of two seas, the great Rock of Gibraltar salutes you with its signal-gun.

Ever awake and watching, yet peaceful with the calm of conscious strength, the great fortress rests on the waters like some fabled monster of the deep taking a sun-bath, his head thrust far out into the lapping waves, his tail gently tickling the shores of the Straits he guards so well. Seaward, its frowning cliffs rise perpendicularly hundreds of feet above the tireless water, whose constant action, gentle though it be, has in the course of ages honeycombed the rock with many caverns where wind and water meet, filling them with a treacherous, swirling flood, a criss-cross of many currents not rashly to be adventured. Yet there are days in the hot summer season, when the ocean pulse beats like that of a dying man, that a boat manned with cool heads and strong arms may push a little, a very little, way into these dark places, and gaze on the jagged rocks that thrust up through the water on every side; but these days are seldom, and even when they do occur there is little to tempt men to the risk. Weird places, of a truth, are some of the water-caves, winding far into the bowels of the rock—how far no man can say, only the little rock-pigeons that live and nest in their cracks and crannies can tell.

High above these great holes of Nature's making,  
No. 144.—VOL. III.

the rock is scarred almost to its summit with others made by man. Neatly cut are they, and far more deadly in their own way than the watery ones below them, for in each sleeps a grim and monstrous gun, and the stack of shot and shell behind waits but a word to be hurled screaming and hissing into space or Spain, according to the exigencies of the occasion.

A strong place indeed is Gibraltar, known throughout both services as 'Gib,' and one of the best-tempered links in the steel chain with which the Great Queen strings her many jewels together. But, apart from this important duty, there are other good reasons for its being; for to 'Gib' come our suckling warriors to learn how to keep awake on guard, and how to make the best of the doubtful pleasures of 'bully beef' dinners, washed down with distilled sea-water. Here, also, the hot summer sun and busy mosquito, not to mention the scarcity of the genial cook or nursemaid, give him a foretaste of what he may expect when the great troop-ship swallows him, to disgorge him again to serve at Aden or Omdurman and other unholy places of the same kidney.

Gibraltar also provides a pleasant and lucrative post for some gallant old General nearing his end—and perhaps Westminster Abbey: 'His Excellency the Governor.' His duties are not very onerous; he has a General of lower rank to look after the troops, and beyond these there is little to govern. Hence he has leisure for other things, one of the chief of which is to attend to the due and fitting entertainment of the numerous distinguished travellers who in the cool weather honour the Rock with the presence of their fine yachts and, generally speaking, portly persons. These birds of passage consume most of their entertainer's money as well as his time; and not a few Governors leave the Rock poorer men than when they took up the appointment. There is one task, how-

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SEPT. 1, 1900.

ever, that every Governor imposes on himself with much satisfaction—to wit, to discover some unarmed spot in his command where by dint of much scheming he can prevail upon the authorities at home to allow him to make more holes, filled with bigger guns than anything accomplished by his predecessors. This successfully carried out, and the battery duly christened with his own honoured name, he feels that he has done his duty; and when he sails away home into that obscurity which often overwhelms old soldiers when no longer on the active list—this is one of their greatest trials—he feels that the memory of his reign will be perpetuated, with the help of the battery, in at least one corner of the earth as long perhaps as the old Rock itself stands.

Such is Gibraltar. It had another name once, and other masters; but the lion lairs there now, and means to stay, yelp the jackals ever so loudly.

An old and weather-stained man, a Moor, lay on the edge of the rough track that, at the time of this story, did duty as a road through the many miles of cork-woods that stretched between the Spanish town of San Roque and the conglomeration of wretched shanties and ill-built barracks forming the lines that cut Gibraltar off from the mainland, called Linea. The man was motionless, his old brown burnous wrapped tightly round his skinny frame; and an inquisitive hoopoe, hopping about in the branches near by, ventured quite close in its curiosity to see what made this biped lie so still, so remarkably still.

Captain Tom Wooly, of the Royal Slapshire Rifles, known by his friends, and everybody else for that matter, as 'The Sheep,' employed as aide-de-camp to His Excellency the Governor of Gibraltar, came lolloping along the path with loose seat and slack rein, and nearly came a cropper as his pony shied violently at the bare feet and brown legs that so suddenly obtruded themselves on its sight. Barelegged individuals lying about busily engaged in doing nothing are no novel sight in sunny, lazy Spain, the land of *mañana* (to-morrow). But there was something in this man's attitude and appearance—or was it some instinct of the soldier, perhaps?—that prompted the aide-de-camp, after he had recovered his seat, to rein in his pony and take a closer look at the man than otherwise he would have done.

Ancient and dirty Moors are not inviting objects to examine; but it did not take the A.D.C. long to find out what was amiss with this one. The old fellow was dead, or next door to it. Thank God, the British fighting-man, be he officer or private, does not take long when an emergency arises to make up his mind what to do and how to do it! That is his birthright, and one

of the secrets of his success. Consequently Wooly was off his pony without an instant's hesitation, and promptly at work—unpleasant though the task was—attempts to revive the lamp of life so nearly burnt out in the disreputable bundle of old rags beside him. Presently his efforts were successful; with many a gasp and grunt the patient opened his eyes at last, fixing them in amazement on his rescuer, and spoke in feeble accents in Spanish, which soft and melodious tongue was familiar to the A.D.C. He had studied it long before coming to Gibraltar; and it was owing to this accomplishment he had obtained his present post.

'Ah, señor, you are kind! Another taste of the blessed spirit, I pray you. A thousand thanks, señor! I live again, though but for a brief space, I fear; too brief, alas! for the fulfilment of my purpose. Ah me! I must leave my task undone. What task, and who am I? you ask. Señor, I would gladly tell you did it rest with me alone; but, as it is, my lips are sealed. It must suffice you that I am the last of his race, the last of a once great—ay, noble—family; the last taker of a great oath, the last holder of a mighty secret. More brandy, señor. Ah! you are a good man, though I love not your race. Tell me, I pray you, what is your Excellency?'

'Me? Oh, I am an officer in the service of the Queen of England,' answered Wooly, falling quite unconsciously into the old man's rather inflated manner of speech; 'one who rides swiftly with the messages of His Excellency the noble Governor of the big Rock yonder beyond the Spanish lines; a man with heavy duties and responsibilities' ('Winding the clocks and checking the cellar-book chiefly,' he added to himself), 'and one whose time is precious. But I will help you on your way if it lies with mine, as it doubtless does. We must not tarry long. Already the sun is sinking to the hills behind Algeiras; and when the sun goes so does the evening gun, and then, as perhaps you know, all must be within the fortress gates or stay the night outside.'

'No, señor, my strength is spent,' said the old man. 'It may not be, though my way did indeed lie with yours, even to your very door, for my desire was to seek speech with His Excellency, whose man of confidence you are. To this end have I journeyed many weary leagues in hunger and affliction, in order that I might fulfil the obligations laid upon me by my oath; but I have failed, even as the others of my race have failed. The Fates fight against us ever; and now my last long sleep overtakes me, even before I reach my goal. Stay with me to the end, señor, I beseech you; I shall not keep you long. Feel round my neck, señor,' he continued in fast-failing accents; 'you will find a string, and tied to it a little bag of skin. In that is a single coin; its value is immense to me, but to you none

beyond that of which it is composed. Its secret must die with me, and while I live it must remain in my breast; but when I am dead take it, I beg you, señor, and keep it in remembrance of the stranger you tried to save, and who blesses you with his last breath.'

'Courage, my friend, courage,' cried Wooly. 'You are not going to die just yet if I can help it. I will ride on and get help, and have you carried in to Linea. Once there, you will recover your strength with food and rest, and I shall introduce you yet into the presence of the man you seek—my chief.'

He spoke to heedless ears, for, muttering some words in a tongue unknown to his listener, the old Moor shivered slightly, gave a choking gasp or two, turned over on his side, and lay still; and this time there was no mistake. Even the hoopoe was satisfied, and flitted quietly away.

The A.D.C. rose from his knees with a troubled look, not on account of the presence of death—that, I am afraid, made little difference to him; he was too familiar with it in its dusky form to be concerned about that. He had once been A.D.C. to a great General in a great war—at least the General said it was great, and he ought to have known—and he had seen piles of slain black men, although he had not actually been at the killing. But this had not been his fault. He had been the junior of a large staff, and as such his duties had been in the camp, seeing to the proper icing of his victorious General's champagne, rather than on the field of battle itself. Still, he used to ride out the following day and draw pictures for the papers at home, which was the next best thing to the killing, if you couldn't be at that; and he captured as many orders and medals as the best of them. What more does a man want?

No. Wooly was only concerned at the lateness of the hour. He was in doubt as to the course he should follow. Had he time, he asked himself, to ride round by the *venta* (inn), send somebody from there for the body, and yet reach the Rock before gunfire; or should he just cut across country and make sure of saving the gate, and let the next comer, who would probably be a Spaniard, be burdened with the thing that lay there? He hastily consulted his watch, made a mental calculation of times and miles, and decided, as his better nature prompted, for the *venta* and possible loss of dinner and bed at 'Gib.'

As he stooped to pull the hood of the bur-nous over the poor pinched face, the string round the man's neck caught his eye. Remembering the old gentleman's last words, though he attached little importance to them, he cut it, and was about to place bag and all in his pocket when he remembered that probably things of that description that had hung for ages round the necks of Moors were not likely to much resemble scent-sachets. The bag was easily opened, however, and that

which it contained, a disc of yellow metal—gold, Wooly supposed—about the size of a half-crown, covered with queer marks that he had then no time to examine, hastily dropped into his waistcoat pocket. As it fell it clinked loudly against what Wooly remembered to be a bad dollar that he had taken that very morning in his change after making a purchase from a 'scorpion,' as the mongrel natives of 'Gib' are called. He had put it separately in a pocket apart from his other money, intending to nail it on his door with others of the same breed when he got home. Bad money is plentiful at Gibraltar; the happy-go-lucky English officer is such an easy victim. As Wooly heard the sound an idea struck him. He knew something of Spanish ways, and saw the likelihood of a little fun at their expense; so he popped his dollar into the bag, retied the string where he had cut it, then mounted and quickly rode off at a canter, with something very like a grin overspreading his sunburnt features.

He had got but a little way, however, when a turn in the path brought him in sight of a couple of *guardas* leisurely riding towards him. These were exactly the men he wanted, so he galloped up and quickly told his story. In a few minutes more all three horsemen reached the spot where the body lay.

The gendarmes, or *Guarda Civile*, as they are called in Spain, are the pick of the soldiers of that nation. A detachment of them used, at the time of this story, to be quartered in Linea, and they patrolled the cork-woods in pairs, spick and span in their handsome uniform, with the idea of protecting travellers from the often too pressing attentions of the charcoal-burners who inhabited those regions. These latter gentry were in reality nothing but smugglers and brigands, extorting blackmail under the guise of alms whenever they thought that they could do it in safety. There were good reasons for suspecting that the *guardas* rather sympathised with these rascals, and had conveniently deaf ears and blind eyes when the victim of the robbery was a member of the unloved garrison of the Rock. Be that as it may, it in no wise affected their politeness and courtesy after their invariably too late arrival; and, as usual, Wooly found them grave, dignified, and slightly patronising.

'And had he nothing with him, señor; no bundle or anything of that kind?' asked one of the men as they both lit their cigars—after offering each in turn their cases to Wooly—and gazed pensively at the body at their feet.

'Nothing but that little bag you see, tied round his neck with string,' answered Wooly, who expected the question; adding, as if he had suddenly remembered it, 'and, by Jove! now I think of it, he said that it contained something of immense value. Let us examine it;' and the A.D.C. made as if he were about to act on his words.



The *guardas*, their former listlessness vanished, interposed hastily, with eager motions and sparkling eyes.

'Stop, señor! stop! I order you,' almost fiercely cried the man who had previously spoken. 'We must open nothing, touch nothing. This bag must be opened by the Alcalde at San Roqué alone. It will be his duty to see that its contents, whatever they are, go to the proper people: the man's family if they can be found, failing which to the State. We must take everything as it is, intact, and at once too'—and suddenly changing his tone to one of suspicious suavity—'and as doubtless your Excellency's time is, of great value—for we know you to be a great functionary at Gibraltar—we will manage to dispense with your Excellency's attendance at San Roqué, for we would not dream of giving you more trouble than you have already had over this wretched carrion, and we beg your Excellency to dismiss the little matter from your honourable mind.'

'I am very much obliged to you indeed, my friends,' answered Wooly, 'and, unless you send me a summons to appear, shall, as you suggest, forget this business entirely. Now I must be off, so *adios, señores, adios*—or, as we say in English, good-bye, you two infernal scoundrels, good-bye;' so, returning the men's punctilious salute with one of equal gravity, though he could hardly help laughing as they smiled affably in response to his, as they thought, English good wishes, he once more sprang into the saddle and cantered off.

He had not gone many yards, however, ere he heard a fierce altercation going on behind him, and, glancing back, saw the precious pair already quarrelling over the possession of the bag and its supposed valuable contents. Thus did his little joke promise to bear early fruit; and Wooly wondered, as he made his way home, if the guardians of the peace all over the world were the guardians of the pieces as well.

## THE EMPLOYMENTS OF WOMEN.

By ISABELLA FVIE MAYO.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.



SOMETIMES one is almost tempted to imagine that the 'employment of women' is a matter concerning only the last two or three decades. Yet women have done their full half of the world's work since the world began. Old adages tell us that 'a woman's work is never done.' If a modern poet has sung that 'men must work and women must weep,' was he not singing of 'three fishers,' men of a class in whose toil their womenkind have always borne a specially full share?

Therefore, gratulations over the 'increased' employment of women do not really signify that women do more work than before, but only that they are doing different work, and doing it in a different way. These new phases may, indeed, be less due to the presumed 'progress' of the sex than to the force of certain social changes which may be in themselves either evolutionary or devolutionary.

Consideration of this matter may be allowed to start from two simple premises: first, that woman has as much right to live as man; and second, that neither sex has any right to dictate how the other is to earn bread.

Yet, let us remember that there is always a chill in the regard cast on men who deliberately choose labours which women can do equally well. Few seem to suspect that a corresponding shade of contempt might with equal justice attach to women who ardently resolve to do what men can

do equally well. To deny this is at once to put the sexes on a different footing.

Practical observation leads one to believe that each man or woman, individually, should be left absolutely free to earn bread by that which comes as the 'next thing,' or for which any special idiosyncrasy or circumstance fits him or her; and this without any consideration of sex. Yet the same practical observation leads to the conviction that the direction of men and women in masses should be towards those forms of labour which most tend to the healthy development of the bodily and mental functions and attributes natural and attractive in either.

Has not the wife of a disabled skipper risen to the occasion and brought her husband's vessel safely into port? Has not an elderly man been known to go out contentedly charing when no old woman was to be found to do the duty? Both experiments were successful, individually; yet we think few would wish them to be made a basis for wholesale reversal of accustomed traditions. Possibly the same may be said concerning other divergences from old methods which at first may not strike one as in such glaring contrast.

The greatest change that has taken place in women's work is to be found in the number now employed as clerks of every conceivable kind. There is nothing so innately glorious in a clerk's career as to indicate this as a forward step for women. Many women always did clerical work

in the shops and warehouses of fathers, brothers, or other relatives or friends. Social and economic changes leading either to the extinction or to the enormous enlargement of such establishments have entirely altered conditions under which households did their business among themselves. What a few women formerly undertook as part of natural duty, thousands now do as wage-earners. Indeed, a perilous glamour having been thrown around the 'independence' and 'opportunities' supposed to attach to this new state of things, the clerk-market is now deluged with women, and men are being undersold and driven out. This may not end badly for the men; but it is hard to understand how there can be promotion for girls in a change from any other duties to mere quill-driving for a wage.

The biggest markets for such labour, whether in the different branches of the Civil Service or in houses of business, are found in capital cities, where, however, the money earned thereby will seldom do more than barely pay for the cost of living. Indeed, one wishes one could discover what proportion of such women's work is not, in one way or another, 'assisted labour.' One novel makeshift has already appeared in the form of various 'combined homes,' and similar expedients, in which congeries of people of one sex and of about one age, under little restraint and drawn together by no natural affinity, undergo anew many of the evils of monastic institutions without some of their greatest advantages!

The authorities who give information as to openings for this kind of work, its payment and prospects, generally indicate large cities as its proper field, and seem apt to state as its minimum wage what is practically its maximum, and, as its maximum, what is the wholly exceptional. In one instance it has been expressly stated that the salaries in Scotland are less 'because the standard of living is lower in that country'—another instance of the misuse of a phrase which thus deludes the foully-housed but highly-rented consumers of city milk, tinned foods, and alcoholic liquors into imagining that they are an order of beings superior to those who live under better social conditions, or to dwellers in lands which lie nearer to the sun!

The rush of educated or partially educated women towards clerical work of all sorts is explained because its requirements, or most of them, are believed to come within the scope of an ordinary school education, while such technical aptitudes as may be necessary may often be got by 'giving time' till experience is gained. Yet in no kind of work can the culture which comes of wide reading and the intelligence born of trained observation and memory be more advantageous. The 'ordinary copyist,' whether she toiled yesterday with her pen or toils with a typewriter to-day, is in a sense a misnomer. Authors who need such help do not give out

manuscript in fair round hand and well-arranged pages. Illegibility, contractions, and confusion of all sorts, nouns frequently of foreign origin, and strange scientific phrases—all have, in turn, to be divined. Skill in paragraphing and punctuation always has full value. Women who are not equal to these things must never expect the best class of clerical or secretarial work.

The professions of medicine, of art, music, and literature all now stand wide open to women. Yet, if these are to be pursued with any success, they demand not only special gifts, but also costly training and prolonged apprenticeship. They offer no inducements to women who desire or need to earn money speedily. Yet music and art often tempt young women into a busy idleness of 'attending classes' or 'practisings' which serve to veil their triviality or indolence from hopeful relatives doomed to disappointment when the time comes for practical results. As for the so-called 'lady journalism,' any journalism which bears the sex-line across it—the record of fashions, society functions, &c.—hardly ranks as an intellectual pursuit.

Medicine as a woman's profession still provokes certain questions, though everybody feels that these must be left to work themselves out freely, and that any arbitrary closing of the medical ranks against female aspirants is in future intolerable and impossible. Yet this new departure probably stands far more securely on this basis of the common freedom of a common humanity than on any of the special pretexts which were once urged in its favour. The idea that feminine delicacy was to be protected by the advent of the female practitioner had too much regard to false delicacy. It may be also asked, Can a robust medical experience be developed from the treatment of only half of humankind; and ought not the opposite sexes in every relation of life to have a bracing and inspiring influence on each other? If this be denied, and men doctors are adjudged to be so undesirable for female patients, why should female nurses be eligible for men patients, and such high ground be taken in their case that we hear that in military hospitals 'gentle birth in the nurses is a *sine qua non*'?—an invidious distinction which is not, to our knowledge, openly drawn around any masculine occupation.

Even 'medical women for India' have critics whose remarks deserve consideration. One woman-writer well known as an exponent of Indian life boldly asserts that nothing should be done tending to encourage Indian women to remain in close seclusion. She reminds us that the humbler Oriental women, notably those of the agricultural class, are practically as free as Europeans, and that every influence should be used to attract the opening of zenana doors. An Indian lady of English education pertinently inquires how far British women are to be

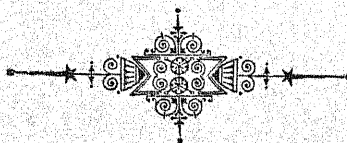
trusted in giving instructions in complicated or abstract matters of either body or soul after having hurried through a 'course' of study of the vernacular.

Sick-nursing is now a very popular calling. Superintendents of hospitals are inundated by applications. Romantic sentiment has gathered about this pursuit till, to the shallow and unreflective, it seems that it must be surely a much more admirable 'mission' to tend wounds and misery than to prevent them by wise ways of public thought or of household management. There seems to many young women a dash of adventure and attractive mystery about life in hospital wards. 'You are much mistaken,' said a great London surgeon to one whom he thought in danger of accepting this prevalent sentiment, 'if you imagine that the majority of nurses enter their profession from very high motives.' Desire for change and excitement undoubtedly directs the choice of many, who go forward much in the spirit of the young woman satirised as writing to her bosom friend that, 'now father is blind and mother is paralysed, it is so dull at home that I think I shall go away and become a nurse.' Of course, such girls seldom remain long in what is an exacting and wearing life; and nobody has more cause to resent these temporary waves of superficiality than have those women who are really born nurses, and whose value is obscured by the inrush of such as are but temporarily tolerated by a confiding public.

The care of the sick can scarcely reach its highest ideal save where personal attachment supplements knowledge and skill. Therefore, it belongs to the life of every woman. There are few households, indeed, where any girl can grow up without some opportunities for this experience. Such opportunities may well be supplemented by lectures, courses of reading, and well-planned demonstrations. If every woman could (as she should), under ordinary circumstances, undertake the care of the sick in her own home, this would but accentuate the value and raise the status of the 'born nurses,' who, never happy save in the special exercise of their gift, would then quite suffice for hospital cases and the grand occasions of major operations. The sight of the cap and veil of the hired trained nurse when imported into a household with women members scarcely raises one's idea of the family morale!

Surely, therefore, we may well look askance at efforts to introduce lady nurses for children in well-to-do homes, since such nurses are, according to the *Woman's Year-Book*, to 'take entire charge of the nursery, and to be prepared to do for the little ones all that a good mother would do, if she were not called upon to perform a host of other duties.' What 'duties' are duty, as coming between a mother and her children—those whom she has herself brought into the world? Would women fain emulate the cuckoo when it lays an egg and leaves it for another bird to hatch and rear? There is but one duty that can ever justify a mother in permanently delegating the care of her offspring, and that is when she must so leave them that she may earn bread for them to eat! Thoughtful people deprecate rash multiplication of crèches, as tending to encourage women to become wage-earners rather than home-keepers. But even that is surely less demoralising than a new employment expressly designed to leave affluent mothers free for 'a host of other duties'—that is, for morning calls, evening parties, theatre-going, bazaar-holding, sitting in committee, organising 'philanthropies,' even indulging in the 'devotion' of multiplied services or meetings; playing at work, while their real work—work which they have sought and obtained from Nature—is left to be done by paid proxy!

One odd condition which seems imposed on these 'mothers' substitutes' (for they are nothing else) deserves the reflection of any who would encourage girls into such a way of life. For the pain which is involved in it can scarcely be appreciated or even suspected by the girls themselves till it is too late. The condition is that they are to fulfil this function only till the children are eight years old! They are not expected to develop into the 'old family nurse,' such as the good dames who earned such unstinted affection from the great Russian poet Pushkin and from our own Robert Louis Stevenson. Such were not the mother's substitute so much as her instructor, ally, and stand-by. But in the new order these sacrificed vestals are not to reap where they have sown. With maternal affections developed and fostered by their duties, they are for ever to 'pass on.' Nurses who have had such experience have told us what it means. 'I can bear it no longer,' said one still in early middle life. Let girls take heed.

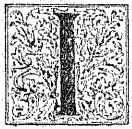




## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

By JOHN OXENHAM.

CHAPTER XV.—CUTTING THE KNOTS.



IN spite of ourselves, and of the fact that all further plans concerning the Colonel might be rendered abortive at any moment by this wretched madman, we fell to discussing possibilities. It was evident that only three courses were open to us: either we must acknowledge ourselves beaten and set him free—which was not to be thought of for a moment; or we must hand him over to the law—which, indeed, we might have to do at any moment if Roussel was caught, but which would not benefit us in any way; or, supposing Roussel fortunately came to grief and ceased to trouble us, we could continue our present course of treatment—here or elsewhere. On these last words the whole matter—so far as the colonel was concerned and apart from the Roussel complication—seemed to hinge; and we found ourselves debating it as earnestly as though no Roussel existed.

Vaurel acknowledged that if a hue-and-cry were started on the Colonel's account we might be subject to a visit from the detectives at any moment; but nothing of the kind was at all likely for another week or ten days; and in that time it was to be hoped that the Colonel would come to a more reasonable frame of mind and open his mouth.

'I don't know,' I said. 'It seems to me he may go on this way till doomsday.'

'Ah! you began feeding him too soon, monsieur,' said Vaurel. 'If you had waited a day or two longer it would have shortened the time now.'

'It would probably have shortened his time, my friend; and I was not prepared to do that.'

'Well, unless we are prepared to lose the game, we have got to hold on to him. Monsieur does not suggest throwing down the cards?'

'Not a bit of it. I am keener than ever to learn all he can tell, and mademoiselle is hungering for news.'

'Then, monsieur, we must find another cage for the bird; for if once they put detectives on the matter they will soon work back here, and smell out things which that gay little captain would never dream of if he lived to be a hundred and ten.'

'Another cage? But that will not be easy to find. Where do you suggest?'

'I must think that out,' said Vaurel, and sat sucking away at his pipe as though the answer lay in the bowl of it. He sat for a long time in silence, and I saw by the slow curls from his pipe and the fixed look in his eyes that he was deep in the matter. I saw him glance across at me from under his brows once or twice as though in

doubt whether to mention what was in his mind; and then he said, 'Monsieur is rich? Is it not so?'

'Yes,' I nodded.

'And monsieur is a sailor?'

'Yes.'

'Then take him to the sea and keep him there till he speaks.'

'To the sea? How?' said I, surprised at the magnitude of the idea.

'By the river—in a boat.'

I sat looking at him through the smoke, and the possibilities of it all began to grow upon me.

'Do you know, I think that's a great idea of yours, Vaurel;' and I sat far into the night and smoked many pipes upon it; and it grew and grew, with ever-widening bounds, till the end of it all was far beyond my ken. It was all vague and shadowy; but somewhere in it, like a golden glory, was a vision of mademoiselle—how I did not quite know; but she was there, and her brother was there too, and we sailed over summer seas, and the days were not long enough for our enjoyment of them.

Vaurel sat patiently watching me through the smoke till he perceived that I saw my way.

'Will it do, monsieur?'

'It will do grandly. How will you get him to the sea? Have you a boat? The punt would not do.'

'I have thought of that. There is a boat belonging to the Château, in which mademoiselle and Monsieur Gaston used to play when they were children. It is here in the cellar, but it has not been used for no one knows how long. It will want repairing. We might get it up in the morning. It's a heavy tub of a thing; but if we can make it tight it is as safe as a house.'

'We will see to it first thing, and then I shall start at once for Southampton. I think I had better call at Combours on my way, Vaurel,' I said tentatively.

'Why, certainly, monsieur. Mademoiselle will be anxious for news.'

'It will take me at least a week to get hold of just the kind of boat I want, and we had better allow a margin of three days to bring her round to the mouth of the river. How long will it take you to bring him down, and how will you manage it? You can't do it all single-handed.'

'I'll manage it right enough if the madman's disposed of. I'll tie him hand and foot, and gag him, and cart him down to the boat in a barrow. Then I'll cover him over with sacks, and down we go. It will take me less than ha'

a day to get to the sea. Everybody knows me, and nobody will ask any questions.'

'You can't tie him and gag him single-handed.'

'I and Boulot and a revolver will manage that all right, monsieur; have no fears. If I need help I'll get Louis Vard. He's safe'—

He suddenly laid his hand on my arm and said in a whisper, 'Listen!'

We listened in blank, staring silence, and far away in the darkness outside, faint and dim through the closed windows, there came a long-drawn wailing cry.

'I thought I heard it before,' whispered Vaurel; and he got up softly and opened the windows as noiselessly as though any undue sound might reach the ears of the distant wailer. 'It's he!'

The woods looked dark and eerie as we stood there looking out over them, straining our ears to catch that most uncanny cry again.

'Are you sure?' I whispered.

'Nothing else could make a sound like that.'

'Wild cats?' I suggested.

'We have none.'

Thin and distant the mournful cry came again out of the darkness, from the direction of the old mill of Bessancy. Vaurel shifted uneasily on his feet in a momentary indecision, and then said, 'I'm going after him.'

'It is quite useless, my friend. You might as well look for a needle in a haystack as look for him in those woods.'

'I'll have a try anyhow,' he said. 'I'll take the dog. Do you keep an ear on the Colonel, monsieur.'

He went quietly down the hall and unloosed Boulot.

'*Au revoir!*' whispered Vaurel as he passed me.

They went down the steps of the terrace and the darkness swallowed them up. For a time I could follow their course by Boulot's snuffles, and then the silence and the darkness dropped down upon me again.

I stood there leaning over the stone balustrade, straining after them, and heard no sound but the falling of the water over the weir. Then, after what seemed an interminable time, there came from the distant woods the sharp report of a gun and the barking of a dog; and all my anxieties increased, for Vaurel, I knew, had taken no firearms with him.

The light from the open window behind me cut a solid shaft out of the darkness. It streamed across the terrace and over the balustrades, and cast their shadows and mine far out over the lawn below.

As I leaned there motionless, peering out into the darkness, I became suddenly aware of the passage of something or somebody between the light and myself. There was a disturbance of the lights and shadows in front of me, and yet I had not moved a limb.

My first thought was of the Colonel. Could he have broken loose and come out through the window? I turned quietly, half-expecting to see him peering out; but, instead, I saw that the light was blocked by the wild figure of a man looking in. And such a figure!—hair all a-bristle, thin bony arms and legs all bare, the remnants of his night-shirt hanging round him in rags—Roussel. His hands rested on the sides of the open window, and he leaned forward on them looking into the room.

I tiptoed across the terrace, hoping to grip him before he turned; but he heard me, and turned and fled into the darkness along the terrace, leaving a rag of his garment in my hand. I sprang after him, but he went as swiftly and noiselessly as a shadow, and when I reached the corner there was nothing but the darkness and not a sound to break it. I dared not follow and leave the house, with its more valuable prisoner, entirely unguarded. I stood and listened, and then returned to my post on the terrace; and presently Boulot came snuffing out of the dark, and close behind him over the turf came his master.

'What was the shooting?' I asked.

'That thick-headed fool Juliot. He was lying in wait for the madman, and took me for him, or he says so, and blazed away at me. Fortunately, he was too frightened to aim straight. I punched that silly head of his, laced hat and all; but we saw nothing of the other.'

'He has been here.'

'Here! How is that?'

I told him, and of my attempt to catch the madman.

'I wish I could come within arm's-length of him,' he said. 'But he can't last long, and if he meets that other fool in the dark he'll probably get his *congé* quick, unless the other's as scared as he was when I ran into him.'

We closed the windows and drew the curtains, and turned again to the solace of our pipes and to spasmodic discussion of the situation.

If the boat could be found—and Vaurel asserted that he could take me to it blindfold, as it was he himself that laid it up after it had been last used by the children; and if it could be made usable—and of that he expressed very little doubt—then the idea of taking Colonel Lepard down to the sea, to a yacht which I would hire in Southampton, and of holding him there prisoner absolutely at our discretion, was the best scheme possible under the circumstances. Still, we could not get away from the fact that everything—all our schemes, Lepard's future, Gaston's future, mademoiselle's future—depended on this wretched madman; and, under the circumstances, the concoction of plans respecting any of these matters while Roussel was still at large was very like the fabrication of matches over a powder magazine.

'Hang it, Vaurel! isn't it possible to lay some

trap for him? We must get hold of him by some means or other,' I said.

'Best trap would be the muzzle of that fool Juliet's gun, monsieur; but I don't see how we're to get him in front of it.'

'We must save him from that, if possible, my friend. He is in a pitiable state, poor devil! but there's no reason why he should be shot like a dog.'

Vaurel grunted noncommittally. He had not quite recovered his equanimity from the events of the evening.

My thoughts wandered back to the gaunt figure of Roussel peering in at the window, and an idea came to me suddenly.

'See here, Vaurel; he is starving both inside and out. It was the light of the room that attracted him. Perhaps he hoped to find something to eat. Suppose we try that again? We'll put food on the table, and leave the window open and the lights up'—

'He will not come back, monsieur.'

'He may; there's no saying. Anyhow, it's easy to try it. Then we shall hide, you and I, say behind those curtains, one on each side of the window. If he should come in we have him.'

'*Bien!* We can try; but I doubt if anything will come of it. To-night?' he asked.

'No good to-night, I should say. He's been scared off for to-night. But we'll try to-morrow night, and the next night, and the night after that. It's really no good my going; in fact, we can do nothing till this wretched Roussel is disposed of. If we can lay hands on him, we must think out some plan of getting him to Paris and putting him in hospital there.'

'I wish he was there now!' said Vaurel fervently. 'He ties our hands, and every day may be of consequence.'

In the morning, after our usual inspection of the prisoner, and the usual offer of release in exchange for information, which was met with the usual sullen scowl and tightening of the hollow black cheek, we descended to the cellars. Vaurel led me straight to the boat, which lay on its chocks, carefully covered with a tarpaulin, and with its wheeled carriage beside it. We examined it carefully, and finding its timbers sound enough, it seemed likely that a few days' soaking in the river would make it as tight as a drum. We loaded it up at once, and Vaurel unbolted the door at the end of the passage which led out on the level at the south end of the Château, and we trundled the boat across the lawns down to the river. She took in water slowly through the seams when we both got into her; so we filled her, tied her to the bank, and left her there awash to soak at her leisure. Then Vaurel went back to the cellar to sort out her gear, and I strolled on along the river-bank, thinking of mademoiselle, and wonder-

ing greatly if all my efforts on her behalf, and all my hopes on my own, were to end in failure because of the craziness of Roussel and the contumacy of Lepard.

We duly laid our trap that night. We spread the table in full view of the window. We left the window wide open and the lamps lit, and flattening ourselves against the wall behind the window-curtains, waited in silent patience for what seemed endless hours; but nothing came of it, somewhat to Vaurel's satisfaction, I think, for he had no faith in my plan. When he closed the windows and drew the curtains, he dropped into a chair with a sigh of relief at last, and said, 'That's worse than shot-drill. I always did hate standing still. It's the hardest work in the world.' Then he charged his pipe, poured himself out a glassful of red wine, and made himself comfortable.

We were both on the *qui vive* for Roussel's uncanny cry; but the evening passed quietly, and we were both tired enough to be glad to go off early to bed.

I woke with a start in the middle of the night, and found myself in a cold sweat of something very like terror, though I had no idea what had caused it; but in another moment I knew, for there it came again, startling all the echoes through the great empty house—the long-drawn, pitiful wail that we had heard the night before. It was the cry of a lost soul; and though I knew perfectly well that the lost soul was Roussel, cold chills crept up my spine, and I felt the hair at the back of my head begin to bristle.

I heard one terrified howl from Boulot, and then he was silent. I sprang out of bed and stumbled to the door. The madman was in the house somewhere, and we must find him. I felt my way to Vaurel's room, which was only a few steps down the passage, and my flesh chilled and prickled as I went, lest I should run into the terror in the dark.

'Vaurel!' I hissed.

There was no answer; but I heard the bed shake, and felt my way towards it.

He was under the bedclothes in utter panic. He had, I supposed, been awakened out of his sleep as I had, and had not yet got over the fright of it.

'Vaurel!' I said, and put my hand on the writhing heap of bedclothes.

He only moaned from under the clothes.

I pulled the things down from over his head, in spite of his efforts to keep hidden, and said, 'Come out, Vaurel! Don't be a fool! Roussel is in the house somewhere.'

'Is it you, monsieur?' he gasped. 'I thought it was the devil himself. Did you hear it?'

'Of course I heard it. It frightened me into a fit almost; but after all it's only Roussel, and we can tackle him. I wonder what the Colonel thinks of it.'



'He'll think his master's come for him,' said Vaurel, recovering. 'Have you got your revolver, monsieur?'

Suddenly Boulot, in the hall, broke out into a fury of howls and yelps and screams of fear and rage, till the whole house rang again. We ran out on the landing, and heard him flinging himself out the length of his cord till the door rattled like a loose shutter in a gale; and when the cord brought him to with a short turn, he choked and yelled and sprang out again and again, for he had seen or smelt the man, and no longer thought it was a ghost or the devil, as Vaurel said.

I must confess that I had no liking for going downstairs; but it was no good standing there in our shirts, so we cautiously began the descent, and derived a certain amount of courage from the jostling of our shoulders against one another.

Vaurel called to Boulot, and the dog gave a hoarse bark of joy at the sound of him. Vaurel loosed his collar, and he dashed away with a yelp of satisfaction in the direction of the door that led to the cellar. We opened the cellar door, and he hurled himself down; we heard him worrying around with short barks and yelps, and then away he went across the lawn.

'Thousand devils!' said Vaurel. 'I must have left that cellar door open.'

That was undoubtedly what had happened. Roussel, prowling round the house, had come upon the open door and strayed into the cellars. He had doubtless come up the cellar steps; and when Boulot caught sight or wind of him, and burst out into that tornado of howls, the madman had fled.

It was no good thinking of sleep for that night. We threw on some things, and lighted the lamp in the room where we had been sitting. Vaurel started a fire, for the air was chilly, and we sat before the hissing logs and smoked the rest of the night away. Boulot came back presently, and flopping contentedly down at our feet, intimated his intention of spending the night before the fire, and we could not find it in our hearts to disturb him.

Vaurel did not attempt to conceal the fright he had had. 'I awoke in a fright,' he said, 'and did not know what it was; and when I heard the next howl I was certain it was the devil come in person for the Colonel. It seemed to me he might make a mistake if he was wandering around loose like that; and when I felt your hand on me, monsieur, I was sure he had got me; though what good the bedclothes would have been against him I didn't stop to think. And you, monsieur—you had no fear?'

'Hadn't I? Why, my hair was standing on

end, and my legs felt stuck full of prickles; but I came to my senses sooner than you did.'

'Curse that gibbering idiot!' said Vaurel. 'I never had such a fright in my life—never! *Mon dieu!* I would like to know what the Colonel made of it all.'

To judge by the Colonel's face next morning when we visited him, he had had quite as bad a time as the rest of us. He was the colour of lead, and his eyes had a scared look in them; but the bristly black cheek was clenched as tight as ever, and he spoke never a word.

Vaurel ostentatiously bolted the outside cellar door while it was still daylight next day. He laughed at me when I suggested laying the trap again for Roussel, but finally consented; and we arranged the room as before, and took our stand behind the curtains on each side of the open window. Never a sound came, and we waited and waited—hours longer, it seemed to me, than on the previous night. Then, just as I was on the point of giving it up again as a bad job, my heart gave a leap into my throat, and the cold chill of the previous night began to creep out on me again; for, without the slightest sound, I saw through the slit between the curtain and the wall a gaunt, bristling head come sneaking in at the window. The wild eyes rolled round the room and seemed to start out of their sunken caverns at sight of the food and wine on the table. Something clucked in his throat, and he began to dribble at the mouth. He was evidently leaning forward with his hands on the sides of the window, as I had seen him that other night.

Cautiously, soundlessly, one thin, hairy leg came inside; then there was a crash outside, and the poor fool threw up his arms with a shrill, womanly scream, fell forward in a heap on the floor, and lay still; and as we sprang out from behind the curtains the window was suddenly filled with the blue-and-silver figure of the gendarme Juliot, and the smoke was still curling in the barrel of his rifle.

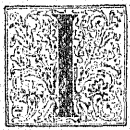
'*Voilà, messieurs!*' he said triumphantly. 'That, I think, puts an end to the ghost;' then to me, '*Tiens!* monsieur, I did not know you were here still.'

'He is finished,' said Vaurel. 'You had it all your own way this time, Monsieur Juliot.'

'The people up there,' said the gendarme, jerking his head in the direction of the village, 'are having fits about him. I had to take the matter in hand myself.'

We gave Juliot as much cognac as was good for him, and then in the dim dawn I persuaded the two men to carry the poor frail body up to the village; nor could I help feeling easier in my mind now that one of our stumbling-blocks was removed.

## TOMATO CULTURE IN SUSSEX.



IN the well-known 'Trial Scene' in *Pickwick*, the amiable old gentleman is represented as ordering mutton-chops and tomato-sauce. Mutton-chops are a commonplace article of consumption; but an air of gentility is given to the repast by the sauce which was to be taken with it. When the novelist sent forth his work to the world he succeeded in giving a tone of refinement to the famous founder of the Pickwick Club by the skilful touch of making him ask for a sauce in which the distinguishing ingredient was a foreign, and consequently an expensive, product of the vegetable kingdom.

The native habitat of the tomato is South America, and it came to us by way of the United States. As the tomato-plant, when cultivated out of doors, requires sunshine and a high temperature, it was grown successfully in many parts of North America; and when specimens of its fruit were first sent to this country they were rather prized for their colour than enjoyed for their flavour. It took a considerable time to familiarise people with the foreign novelty, and they hesitated to partake of it either in its cooked or uncooked state. It was only after it began to be grown here, and trial was made of it in various quarters, that confidence was felt in it as a fruit which could be consumed with safety and satisfaction. When first known among us it bore both its native name tomato and the name of 'love-apple,' which the Americans seem to have given it. Of the two names, the first only survives.

The tomato-plant will grow out of doors in England and bear fruit; but to have any success it should be placed by a wall and have a southern or western exposure. As an outdoor annual it is decidedly tender; a cold, wet season or the slightest touch of frost is fatal. On its introduction into Italy it was found to be much more at home there than in the British Isles; the dry atmosphere and strong sunlight of Italy is so favourable that during the hot season its fruit is largely used by the peasantry with their meals, and, being a cheap and a refreshing food, it is a welcome addition to their somewhat scanty larder.

In our own country the tomato is essentially a hothouse plant. For its successful growth it should be abundantly watered; but there must also be a free circulation of dry, warm air, so that the leaves and blossoms will not become mildewed. Then two other conditions are necessary: it should have an ample amount of sunshine, and the soil must be of the richest quality. Like the rose-bush, it is a gross feeder; and if it is to succeed, fully one-fourth of the soil should be manure obtained from the stableyard, and this ought to be only partially rotted. The watering of the plant and the preparing of the soil in

which it grows can be managed in almost any part of the kingdom, and for economical heating all that is needed is a cheap supply of coal; but the necessity for an exceptional amount of sunshine seems practically to limit tomato cultivation to one particular district of the kingdom.

It has long been known that the strip of land in Sussex which lies between the range of chalk-hills called the South Downs and the English Channel, and extending from Lymington to a few miles east of Worthing, is a region where fig-trees grow in the open air and produce the green figs which supply our fruit-markets. Elsewhere this fruit has to be raised under glass, at a cost which prevents it from competing with figs produced in the open air. The presence of warmth and sunlight sufficient to mature a crop of figs pointed out this district as certainly the best for raising tomatoes, peaches, grapes, and other fruits which require heat and—what is even more important, and cannot be produced by artificial means—sunlight. It thus happens that any one who travels through this district by the coast route of the Brighton and South-coast Railway can see on both sides of the line great clusters of hothouses, and at most of them a circular windmill in motion—a kind of windmill entirely unlike the old-fashioned one with its four huge arms. At the stations passed notice will also be taken of immense piles of baskets on the way to or from the London and provincial fruit-markets. The strong round baskets hold exactly twenty-eight pounds of tomatoes each. Some idea may be formed by the traveller of the extent of the business when he is told that four baskets hold a hundredweight of tomatoes, and eighty baskets a ton.

When an early crop of tomatoes is wanted a sowing is made in January, and other sowings may take place at intervals until the beginning of September. From the last sowing a supply of fruit is obtained during the winter months. Market-gardeners raise crops which will be ready for sale at seasons when they expect good prices will be obtained; they know that when crops like apples and oranges are first offered a decline in the price of tomatoes is certain. It is also found expedient, in gardens where tomatoes are the principal crop, to have other crops on which to rely to make up for losses and to occupy the staff of workmen throughout the year. Hothouses for grapes, peaches, and cucumbers, and for forcing strawberries and chrysanthemums, are built side by side with tomato-houses. A portion of the ground is also frequently set apart for mushrooms; and this crop is gathered from the sides of ridges which are from three to four feet high. As the mushroom, unlike the tomato, does not thrive in sunshine, the ridges are littered

with loose straw to protect them from the sun's rays and heavy falls of rain. In several gardens apple and pear trees are planted; but as the ground is in a high state of cultivation, only choice varieties are raised.

The writer spent some time last August at the Lyminster Nursery grounds, which are situated about half-way between Arundel and Littlehampton, and obtained from the manager such measurements and information as will convey some idea of the work done in one of the largest undertakings in Sussex.

In most of the older nurseries the supply of water is obtained by means of a pump worked by a windmill. This is, however, an unreliable source of power; and as it sometimes fails in warm weather when a supply of water is a necessity, the hothouses run the risk of having their crop destroyed by the stoppage of water-supply for even a single day. Therefore, at the Lyminster and several other nurseries the windmill has been discarded and an atmospheric engine used instead. This engine is of a half-horse power; there is no boiler with its safety-valve or other complicated parts to get out of order or cause an explosion. The engine is small, and all that it requires is to be well oiled and have its fire lighted, when in a very short time it is ready to start, and keeps on pumping as long as the fire is maintained. In four hours such an engine pumps about three thousand gallons of water into a tank supported on iron columns at a height of thirty feet. From this tank an iron pipe conveys water to the hothouses and all parts of the ground; an india-rubber tube fixed on the supply-pipe being used for watering the plants, which is thus done at remarkable speed and with great economy of labour. In former days to get a supply of water it was usual to dig a well at considerable expense. Now it is only necessary to drill a hole about fifty feet deep and put in an iron tube; into this a pipe an inch and a half in diameter is inserted, and through these the engine pumps a supply of water which has never failed even in the driest summers.

On visiting the Sussex nurseries it is found that the hothouses vary much in size, one owner preferring those of moderate dimensions, while another considers there is economy in the consumption of coal when they are built on a large scale. As each hothouse has its own heating apparatus, and as it is easy to ascertain the value of the tomato crop and the cost of coal employed in its production, it would seem to be a simple problem to determine what is the best size of house to build. But the question has practical difficulties; for, though it may be cheaper to raise a certain weight of fruit in a large house, the loss is greater should any accident occur to render the crop inferior in quality or lighter in weight.

In the Lyminster Nursery the two largest tomato-houses are two hundred and thirty-five and two hundred and sixty-five feet long respectively, and each of them is thirty-two feet wide. In the smaller house about three thousand plants are grown; in the larger about three thousand five hundred. When the crop in these and the other houses is ripe, the work of gathering, weighing, and packing is very heavy. As with all fruit crops, which are necessarily of a perishable nature, there can be no delay; each tomato and cucumber as soon as it is ripe must be picked and despatched so as to reach the consumer before it shows any appearance of shrivelling or decay. Should there be a superabundant supply in the market the excess falls into the hands of the costermongers, by whom they are sold from stalls or barrows in the poorer districts. Ripe fruit must be sold at once for what it will bring; and the grower has the utmost confidence that the salesman or agent will secure the best possible price for his consignments.

There is complete organisation in the business of market-gardening, and the transit from Sussex by railway is so rapid and reliable that very little fruit is allowed to become unfit for food. Of course, in the fruit-trade, as in all trades, prices are determined by supply and demand; but there are few commodities in which prices fluctuate so much and so rapidly as market-garden produce. In the case of mushrooms, for example, the price has been known to fall from tenpence per pound to twopence in one week, owing to a glut of the market.

In market-gardening it is found inadvisable to put all the eggs into one basket; in other words, it is not prudent to depend on tomatoes or on any other crop alone. Loss in one article of produce may be compensated by success in others, and extensive failure in one season's crop may be made good by success in subsequent seasons. It seems necessary also that cultivation should be carried on upon an extensive scale if profit is to be made; and to this end it is essential that the market-gardener should have ample capital. The small producer appears entirely out of place, as he cannot meet the casualties to which the business is liable; and unless he can send large supplies to the agents, they do not consider it worth opening an account with him. The supply of tomatoes in Covent Garden, and in the markets of Liverpool and the Midland cities, is furnished by professional gardeners whose business is conducted on an extensive scale. Tomato culture in particular does not seem a business which can ever be made a cottage or minor industry; it is carried on everywhere in the Sussex belt of country on so extensive a scale that unless the produce can be sent in hundredweights and tons it has small chance of finding its way into the markets.



## THE SALT COUNTRY.

By CHARLES EDWARDES.

**I**N accordance with ancient etiquette, when the town-crier goes through the streets of Northwich announcing a public sale, he ends his announcement with the words, 'God save the Queen and the lord of this manor.'

This old custom has been revived quite recently. It is at least harmless if the bellman has plenty of time on his hands; it also excites pleasant fancies about the days when the residents in the Weaver valley were not aware of the vast salt-lagoons stretching for miles under the earth whose crust they inhabited so peacefully. But really, after even a brief visit to this haunted spot of Cheshire, one cannot help feeling that it would be just as well if the bell-ringing functionary were to add to the words of his pious appeal, 'And God save Northwich also, lest by-and-by it sink utterly into the caverns which now by man's handiwork stand yawning beneath it to devour it!'

Periodically one hears of this or that subsidence in Northwich or Winsford, chief centres of the salt industry in England, and thinks little about it. The residents in the neighbourhood itself seem so philosophic that the stranger may be forgiven if he also just shrugs his shoulders and merely exclaims, 'What a pity!' By most remarkable luck, no one seems to lose his life in these accidents. There are, to be sure, a number of stock authentic tales of narrow escapes. A brewer's man, with a wain full of beer-barrels, had left the cart, when of a sudden down it went, horses, beer-barrels, and all, and nothing remained but a hole with the earth still tumbling in upon the vanished load. A man was fishing for pike in a pool near Northwich, when he felt the banks sliding under him. He hurried upwards, and then before his eyes whole trees and thousands of tons of earth moved rapidly down into the pool and disappeared, leaving the pool itself much extended. A peasant brought a cow into the town to sell, and lo! a hungry rift broke in the very streetway under his nose, between him and his cow. And so forth. There are scores of less sensational recorded incidents; and the number of houses, churches, and manufactories that have been ruined by subsidence must now be well over a thousand. But the only man known to have been thus lost underneath seems to have been an unfortunate named Littler, who, while mining in the salt rock, had to run with others before the danger of a slide, but returned for his coat, and has never been seen since. Of this event there can be no doubt. One of the poor fellow's comrades told me the tale, pointing out the marly cliff above the mere as the exact upper site of his tomb.

Yet common-sense insists that the security of life in Northwich and Winsford cannot in the future thus be guaranteed by simple rule of three deduction. Year after year the vicious little chimneys of the various saltworks continue to smoke ardently, proving that the pumps are forcing up their millions and millions of gallons of the brine which may be said to be the district's foundation. The brine is, indeed, replaced by the fresh water which drains from the surface through the permeable upper crust; but this rain-water immediately begins to absorb the rock-salt itself—to every gallon two pounds ten ounces of the soluble rock—and thus the new brine in its turn ascends to the vats and the destructive process continues; and little by little, or much by much, the upper surface itself sinks down into the cavernous spaces below. The spacious lakes in the hollows about and even in the salt towns are picturesque enough; but they ripple with malignant suggestion. One knows that a particularly audacious diver might descend into them, pass from their funnel-shaped centre of depression into the bowels of the earth, and thence wander at will in the water-charged bowels of the earth. And by degrees this incalculable number of tons of water bites into fresh subterranean clearings, with fresh devastation above; the loose earth slides down into the water, and far and wide the local centre of gravitation is again disturbed.

At first sight these radiant, low-lying meres of the salt-country seem ideal lures for the skater in times of frost. But it will be surmised that they are nothing of the kind. Imagine the state of the surface ice when after a week's frost the water underneath falls six or seven feet in an hour. Edgar Poe himself could scarcely do justice in fancy to the sequel were a thousand or two skaters to break through and be drawn into the whirl of the funnel at the pool's lowest part. For the same reason these attractive meres are left alone by the swimmer. Their very banks in places are scrupulously avoided. Anything may happen to them at any time. This only is certain: it is their irresistible mission to enlarge and destroy in spite of the endless succession of loads of rubbish of all kinds from many parts of the world which are tilted into their omnivorous maw.

Both Northwich and Winsford are in a perilous state. Their situation on the Weaver River is curiously similar. The main street of each town descends at a sharp incline to the waterway, and climbs thence from a bridge which is constantly in need of readjustment. In Winsford just now one sees more indications of subsidence than in

Northwich, though a short time ago it was the latter town that yielded sensational paragraphs for the press. The Winsford main street drops at about half a right angle to the river, and the rise on the other side is even more considerable. In the lowest parts of the depression are very plain proofs that the tradesmen have been taught by experience to be ready for all emergencies. Shops that were once level with the road must now be entered down flights of steps. Other shops have yielded up their basement stories completely. They are supported on piles which descend immediately from the boards of the shops themselves. A jeweller, a pork-butcher, and a shoemaker do business on these discomfiting terms. The stranger would hesitate before entering the premises—that gaping cavity underneath has so very evil a look. But in Winsford they seem reconciled to the inevitable. They argue that the sinking of the piles can be the more easily watched and measured; nor does it occur to them that the risk of a sudden collapse, which may in their situation end in a rapid glide even into the brown water of the Weaver River, is worth long consideration. And yet this is just what has been happening for years with the land scarcely a stone's-throw away. The river hurries towards the town of black chimneys and ugly red tenements through a vast lake of the characteristic kind, and there is no knowing when all the lower parts of Winsford will disappear and help the lake's extension. The remainder of the town will then have to be connected by a high-level bridge, for which any one of the Thames bridges in London may serve as a model.

There are some rather handsome buildings in the low-lying parts of Winsford. The Verdin Jubilee Baths are especially notable, and the whole district will deplore their loss. There is also Parr's Bank close to the Weaver Bridge—so close, in fact, that, to echo a mild local jest, unless you are 'above Parr' in Winsford, you ought never, for your house's sake, to feel anything like safe from a sudden subsidence and its accompanying introduction to the mud of the Weaver. Nearly adjacent is an operatives' club-house, plain but sturdy, with the quaint and somewhat challenging inscription, 'Who'd have thought it? This building was built by working men for the working classes.' It is impossible not to wish that its subscribers had been more prudent in the choice of ground for their institution. Nothing could be more convenient if proximity to the seat of their labours were the most desirable feature of their club; immediately behind the houses on the opposite side of the street are the acres and acres of the saltwork, studded with short black chimneys and possessed by the salubrious steam of boiling brine. But the soil is slipping from its foundations, to show that it is quite impartial in its antipathies; and sooner or later its fate will be the same as that in store for its neighbour

buildings. It may not have so far to fall as the rows of slatternly tenements on the high land just south of the town, the back premises of which stand on wooden stilts above the ground that is slowly and inevitably sliding away from them; but they are all about equally insecure. The distorted appearance of these meaner houses must at times have a curious effect upon the muddled heads of their tenants. When the brain is slightly awry with a little more beer than is wise, the uneven floor, lolling doorways, and tipsy-looking edifices may well seem a taunt to the suffering reveller himself. The iron rosettes which decorate the houses are of course not merely ornamental excrescences; without them and the iron rods that run from them half the buildings would on little encouragement collapse like card castles before a puff of wind.

Middlewich, some three miles to the east of Winsford and six south of Northwich, does not as yet show such signs of subterranean emptiness as Winsford. A miserable little brook meanders through it in quest of the Weaver; chimneys of abundant saltworks rise within a stone's-throw of its main street; the people wear clogs as in Winsford; and on the sidings of its railway station are companies of trucks laden with 'butter' salt for export. A few old half-timbered houses of the downright Cheshire type are welcome objects in its streets; and, like the other 'salt' towns, it is profusely supplied with taverns for the workers in its thirst-inspiring factories. But it stands, upon the whole, sufficiently erect. The old church in the lowest part of it may never, one hopes, be in positive danger, although the tombstones in its churchyard have already assumed eccentric attitudes where they have not gone from the perpendicular plumb to the horizontal. Near it are certain clear traces of mischief: a house in ruins, others out of line and sunken, and others braced in the conventional way for buildings with weak backs. At a venture, one may surmise that insurance rates here are by no means so high as at Northwich and Winsford, and the trade of builder is not quite so replete with compensations. In these two towns lately they have taken to building houses in a clumsy amalgam of bricks and wood, whereby it is comparatively simple to give them a nudge upwards in case of need. The old style was to live in the subsiding edifice with complete and admirable trust in Providence, moving from floor to floor as it sank, until it became in course of time a building of something less than half a story. There is an inn in Winsford—the 'Ship'—which has thus gently gone under. Obviously in so bibulous a district a tavern's license has very distinct value. When 'Ship' the first sank to the bedrooms, 'Ship' the second was promptly raised over it, so that the local

privilege might not be lost. One may speculate as to the number of other 'Ships' that will sink and serve as props to their successors ere the general flood occupies the Weaver's valley and sends half the inhabitants of Winsford and Northwich flying, swimming, and floating for their lives.

The country between Middlewich and Northwich is apparently little affected by the mining and melting in the Weaver valley to the west. It is high land for Cheshire, with two pleasant villages, Bostock and Davenham, intervening. The time will come when from the Bostock ridge there will be a fascinating view of the long stretch of islanded water in the valley below. At present one finds enough here to interest in the model neatness of its villa-like cottages, in the multitude of presentation pumps and fountains and sign-posts, with seats which give an air of private opulence to its high-road, and in the famous old blasted trunk of an oak-tree in the heart of the village, bearing a notice that 'this tree stands in the centre of the county of Cheshire.' The air is strong and bracing, and doubtless the salt tang that it gets from the lowlands to the west adds to its salubrity. Indeed, in this condemnation of the saltworks of the 'wich' district for their surface havoc, one may still record with gladness that their operatives are not handicapped in the matter of health, like those of so many other of our island industries. Neither consumption, influenza, nor epidemics of a more virulent kind have much chance with these men who toil in the steam of the bubbling brine.

The pretty spire of Davenham's church, nearer Northwich, lies more in peril than the village of Bostock above. One may sincerely wish it the full measure of safety, for it will have a charming effect from the inland sea of the future. Thence to Northwich there is a gradual decline, until again at the Weaver Bridge, where the town is entered, the familiar tokens of instability recur. There is such a remarkable congestion

of traffic and pedestrians at this base of the agreeable little town, with its curious contrast of the brand-new and the very old, its mellow markets and uneven wynds, that one cannot help entertaining the fear that some day its fate will be like that of the herd of swine in the Bible. The muddy waters of the Weaver will be agitated as never before when that superb but calamitous tobogganing movement sets in.

The saltworks themselves, which are zealously and without cessation working all this ruin, are not as interesting as their destructive mission. One sees the brine emptying into the spacious shallow vats from the pipes which draw it a hundred or two hundred feet from below, where the rock-salt has its caverns. This brine boils, evaporates, and leaves the salt, which has then only to be collected and made marketable in various degrees of excellence. The market itself is, of course, immense; and just because we must have salt to our meat, and it is better to use home-produced stuff than imported material, the Salt Union and the other companies of the 'wich' district are toiling their utmost towards the transformation of the Weaver valley. Some believe that in less than a generation this will assume its new aspect, as a long lagoon studded with islets; others put the time off, and hint that it may be the middle of the next century ere the change sets in. That the county of Cheshire is bound to be much altered by-and-by in its surface no one can doubt. Considered broadly, perhaps the change will not be wholly deplorable when once the waters have finally settled themselves and the inhabitants of the future can build on the shores of the lagoon with fair assurance that they will not be submerged by inundations or slip into the waters without warning. England will be a trifle more picturesque, though the towns which have so long and audaciously presumed to 'sit above the salt' may have gone down for ever into the new Zuyder Zee.

## THE 'ULTIMA THULE' OF AFRICA.



At the present time, when the eyes of the civilised world are turned upon South Africa, and many are talking of settling there in the happy time when the war-clouds are dispersed, it may interest

English readers to hear of a little-known though beautiful part of the Cape Colony. The journey north to Johannesburg has often been described; life on the Karoo and life on ostrich-farms are old stories; but few, I think, know anything of that stretch of country lying between the two southernmost points of Africa—Danger Point and Cape

Agulhas. Up to the present time the district was considered rather an out-of-the-way place, lying as it does quite off the great highways to the north and north-east, though within a hundred and fifty miles of Capetown. The railway only reached the foot of Sir Lowry's Pass, a distance occupying two and a half hours from Capetown, and the rest of the journey had to be done by post-cart. However, the railway now in course of construction over the pass to Caledon is expected to be finished at the end of this year, which will give the outlying portions of Caledon and Bredasdorp easy access to the capital.



This 'Ultima Thule' of Africa is the great health-resort of the colony. Wonderful and magnificent heaths cover the slopes of the lonely hills from August to December, absolutely bewildering in beauty, in vivid scarlet, sea-green, snow-white, orange, yellow, coral-pink, &c., in every imaginable variety of form and size. These give place, a few months later, to the everlasting flowers in yellow, white, red, and purple. The natives ('coloured people,' they call themselves) collect the white variety for export, principally to France and Germany; the coloured flowers are used locally for mattresses, each flower being pressed open between the hands. Though these mattresses have a faint smell of turpentine, they are not at all uncomfortable. All through the year, when one kind of flower disappears it is followed by another in endless succession, almost the loveliest being a sky-blue blossom exactly like a harebell magnified some twenty or thirty times.

Botanists, naturalists, and sportsmen would all find much to delight them here. Game abounds—partridge, pheasant, quail, snipe, plover, wild-duck, and four or five kinds of buck: you will find all on one farm. If the sportsman aspires to the greater excitement of the chase, there is almost always a jackal that has been worrying the sheep, or a 'tiger' (Cape leopard) that has tried to kill a young foal, and has perhaps succeeded; and to exterminate these wild animals is a religious duty.

Then the wild-bird life! I shall never forget riding into a *vlei* one hot summer afternoon, and startling a great flock of flamingoes from its calm waters. They flung themselves straight up into the air, right overhead, in great flashes of white, crimson, and black, and then flew off in a slow and dignified manner towards the sea. Let us follow them down to the shore, the very 'Ultima Thule' of Africa. We ride over low heath-covered hills, every here and there a patch of pure white sand dazzling the eye. Now we hear the thunder of 'the great Agulhas' roll;' but as yet we cannot see the heavy breakers. Let us get to the top of the hill. Here now lies at our feet the long stretch of that cruel shore on which many a good ship has come to a sad end. That white line of foam out at sea marks where the *Celt* was wrecked; those black spots on the sand are beams of wood, fragments of masts, life-buoys, relics of the days ere the lighthouses on Danger Point and Cape Agulhas were built.

Let your horse pick his own way down; he knows the country much better than you do, and is quick of eye and very sure-footed. As there are no hard roads, the horses here are not shod. Now we are on the sands, long, straight, level—stretching away for miles along the water's edge, where a strong salt wind sweeps in from the Indian Ocean. How we enjoy it! How the horses enjoy it too! The dogs are mad with

delight, and are chasing the sea-birds as we gallop along. There they go—the curlews, herons, gulls—all screaming an indignant protest against our intrusion in the world they have held undisturbed for unknown ages, into which we 'Uitlanders' are thoughtlessly rushing. The penguins don't care; they are sitting on rocks far out in the water, very solemnly, all in a row, with nice white waistcoats and neat ties.

Homeward now, round by the great salt-pan. The salt harvest is over, and the salt stored away in that little hut for use later on. This salt is white, rather coarse-grained, and has a pleasant though strong flavour; and after using it for some time ordinary table salt is quite insipid. In winter the pan is covered with water, which dries up in summer, leaving a deposit of salt. Home to the old thatched farmhouse as the short African twilight fades, and the hills grow dark, and the Southern Cross glimmers faintly over all.

#### LAMENT FOR MORAIG.

Cold blow the winds on the heights of Ben Loyal,  
Dense are the mists drifting up from the sea;  
But colder by far are the hands of my Moraig,  
And denser the veil 'twixt my true love and me.

Winds in the corries, go wail for my Moraig!  
Wail for her! Wail for her!  
Sea-birds, whose music is ever a crying,  
Cry for her! Cry for her!

When on Ben Loyal the spring morn was dawning,  
And high on the hill-tops young deer were at play,  
We stood where the burn in the heather sings clearest  
And plighted our love-troth for aye and for aye.

Down by the burnside my Moraig knelt, laughing,  
Held up her hands with clear water to me:  
'Drink of it, lad! May the burn cease its running  
Or ever thy Moraig be faithless to thee!'

Streams of the mountains, that day were ye singing  
Songs of the gladness our lives held in store?  
Streams of the mountains, be silent and sing not.  
Moraig! my Moraig! will hear you no more.

High were our hopes in the gold of spring's dawning,  
Fearless our hearts as the clear sky o'erhead;  
Now at my feet are the brown birch-leaves lying,  
Now in the autumn my Moraig is dead.

Dark loom the clouds sinking down o'er Ben Loyal,  
Gray are the mists drifting up from the sea;  
But darker by far is the life that is left me,  
And all days for ever are gray days to me.

Winds in the corries, go wail for my Moraig!  
Wail for her! Wail for her!  
Sea-birds, whose music is ever a crying,  
Cry for her! Cry for her!  
Cry evermore for her!

L. M. MACKAY.



# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### ON CURIOSITIES AND SOUVENIRS.

By S. SCOTT MONCRIEFF.

Claymore and snowshoe, toys in lava, fans  
Of sandal, amber, ancient rosaries,  
Laborious orient ivory sphere in sphere,  
The cursed Malayan crease, and battle-clubs  
From the isles of palm; and, higher on the walls,  
Betwixt the monstrous horns of elk and deer,  
His own forefathers' arms and armour hung.

—*The Princess.*

**S**UCH a collection as Tennyson describes, of every clime and age jumbled together, is to be found decorating many a home throughout our land, where in the course of centuries veritable museums have been formed of family relics. In them are to be discovered objects of interest picked up in the neighbourhood, and art treasures, as well as curiosities sent from distant lands by members of the family who have gone forth, from generation to generation, to play their part in our widespread national life, yet whose treasures as well as their affections find an abiding place in the old family home. Museums they may be called; but, coming unexpectedly under our notice, each article with its own story, they are without the rigid formality of a collection of things carefully arranged and docketed, such as can only inspire a specialist with enthusiasm.

There is a never-failing charm in a house so well garnished; only a very dull mind can be dull in such surroundings. To children it is a fairyland indeed; for what child does not delight in seeing strange things belonging to the great world outside the nursery—the gates of which one day will be opened to him—where stirring deeds are done, and all as yet appears full of mystery and beauty?

No number of books can teach such effective lessons in geography and history as the sight of the very white cockade worn by a pretty Jacobite ancestress at Prince Charlie's ball at Holyrood, or the sword that at Waterloo brought honour to the family name. The red coat the hero wore and the beauty's stiff brocade, with

many another old-world garment, are still to be seen, veritable ghosts haunting the dim recesses of the garrets. A case of medals teaches the history of the Conquest of India, and more recent trophies tell of the Occupation of Egypt. The walls are hung with banners gaudily emblazoned with texts from the Koran; they were picked up on Soudanese battlefields by a soldier son after his men had routed the dervishes who so proudly carried them. What a cosmopolitan gathering it would be, what a medley of ideas might be exchanged, if these inanimate objects could enjoy the night-time in confidential talk together, as the statues and pictures do—Schidone's eager Duke and the prim Saint by Haste-thee-Luke—according to Browning's fantastic fancy, in the room of the Venetian Lady:

With all its rarities that ache  
In silence while day lasts, but wake  
At night-time, and their life renew,  
Suspended just to pleasure you  
Who brought, against their will, together  
These objects.

What a fascinating night's entertainment it would be if we could but hear the white cockade converse with the cowrie-shell girdle of an African warrior, or the straight, shining sword of Waterloo exchange experiences and discuss the art of war with the crooked Afghan knife and poisoned Zulu assagai!

No moss that during the passing of centuries is left growing about an old house is likely to be of more value than the curiosities, *bric-à-brac*, *souvenirs de voyage*—the peculiar harvest of the traveller, and the moss which, in spite of the old adage, does gather about the rolling stone. It serves to illustrate his tales, perhaps helps to prove them true, when shown to others; but to himself alone does it reveal its full charm. More especially if the traveller is also a connoisseur who does not load himself with meaningless odds and ends, picked up at random, or bought for the mere pleasure of shopping in a foreign land—a

pleasure which appeals with peculiar fascination to lady travellers, who, it is to be noticed, are continually suffering from the memory of bad bargains, and rarely can recall the delight experienced over a successful one.

The connoisseur, if very fastidious, has a dislike to anything bought; he would rather pick up his curio himself—is even at times forced to acknowledge petty theft—and has a great joy in accepting odd presents. Coin pays for everything but sentiment. Do we not know that flowers bargained for and bought have none of the aroma of those that come as a gift? Above all, let the collector allow nothing to find a place in his cabinet that has not a history attached to it, giving it the right to be called a souvenir. A coin picked up by his own hand from amongst the dusty remains of the once great city of Memphis is not to be exchanged for one of gold and finest workmanship.

Many people, perhaps the majority of people, are—as some are deaf to music or blind to colour—unable to feel interest in inanimate things, even in those which, lasting from age to age, while men die and their cities crumble to dust, remain real bits of the lost life of the past; while the antiquary holding an arrow-head in his hand can conjure as with the magic wand of fairyland a world now dead and done with, but whose influence has moulded the life of to-day.

Take the coin picked up at Memphis: what a long train of association it calls forth! There it had lain buried since the days of the Ptolemies, when, in all likelihood, in the ordinary course of everyday affairs, it had been passed from hand to hand during the decline of this, one of the mightiest of ancient cities; for Memphis rose on the banks of the Nile during the dawn of historic time. It is the Noph of the Bible; in its great palaces Menephtah held his court when Moses and Aaron pled before him for the release of his Israelite slaves; it was conquered by the army of Cambyzes; the ancients learned science and philosophy from its priests; Herodotus, Diodorus, and Strabo describe its marvellous temples and palaces, yet they only knew it in its decline. In its streets the early Christian sects fought fiercely with one another over trivial points of doctrine, until they were swept away by the soldiers of the Prophet, strong in the unity and simplicity of their faith. Alexandria drew away its population, and modern Cairo was built from its stones. What other city endured through longer ages and saw greater wonders? Now all that is left of its magnificence, above ground, are a few carved stones and two mutilated statues of the great Pharaoh; the rest lies buried under mounds of rubbish shaded by date-palms. While riding through these groves our traveller paused to watch a group of *fellahin* load their donkey's panniers with the debris of the ruined city, which they use as manure on their fields. To

such base uses come the palaces of the Pharaohs, and, like

Imperious Cæsar, dead, and turned to clay,  
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.

Some loose earth rolling to his feet, the coin fell out, to be picked up and serve as a touchstone that has recalled such a panorama from the history of the past.

Here, again, is a *bola* found when digging a well on the pampas of South America, as far as the east is from the west from Egyptian Memphis, and telling of a strangely different race of men, and of a savage existence in place of advanced civilisation; for the man who wielded this weapon was of a race in its infancy doomed to die out before it had reached maturity, while the Egyptians had grown wise and hoary during the course of uncounted ages.

Without his collection of *bric-à-brac* being gifted with speech in the night-time, when human beings—the puppets now filling the stage—are absent in the Land of Nod, the traveller finds the meeting together of things from diverse parts of the world, representing various stages of civilisation, sufficiently interesting and full of varied and never-ending food for thought.

It is not the antique only that finds a place in our traveller's cabinets; in them are also found all sorts of odds and ends, each one suggestive of some notable phase of life, or, it may be, merely serving to recall charmed hours spent in some lovely land or wondrous city—hours long enough to allow of enjoyable impressions, but too short to bring about the inevitable disillusionment. Mrs Carlyle writes to a friend: 'I assure you I have often gone into my own room in the devil's own humour, ready to swear at "things in general" and some things in particular; and my eyes resting by chance on one of my photographs of long-ago places or people, a crowd of sad, gentle thoughts has rushed into my heart, and driven the devil out as clean as ever so much holy water and priestly exorcism could have done.' Surely any charm that has the power to drive out the devil is to be welcomed—be it the loved face of a friend or the souvenir of some fair country consecrated to happy memory—when in the daily routine of life too often petty affairs and passing worries make us forget to dwell on our larger joys, as when in negligence we allow the creeping ivy to crawl across the window-pane, while with one cut of a knife it may be cleared away, allowing the room to fill with light and air.

This love of gathering round one objects of romantic and historic interest was one of Sir Walter Scott's most marked characteristics. To him every stone and stock revealed its own story, drawing from the vast storehouse of his brain some anecdote or line of ancient song to illustrate its history. He possessed this interest in everything from his earliest years. We find in Lockhart's *Life of Scott* that when a child of six years,



after spending an evening with the gifted authoress of 'The Flowers of the Forest,' he remarked, 'I like that lady, for I think she is a *virtuoso* like myself.' 'Dear Walter,' said his aunt Jenny, who was putting the little lad to bed, 'What is a *virtuoso*?' 'Don't you know? Why, it is one who wishes and will know everything.' Surely he who possesses a mind that wishes to know everything must, wherever fate places him, find a harvest to be gathered, and can never be at a loss for some study to fill the flying hours with interest to himself and others.

What of the collection without the collector? Is there a sadder or more dreary museum anywhere than that of Abbotsford? It but inspires us with regret for the absence of the master-mind. Then that other palace of curios—Strawberry Hill. Are we not glad to enjoy it through the medium of its owner's letters? Do we not read how he winced under the stupid remarks of the idlers who came out of curiosity to inspect his treasures? 'And as vulgar people always see with the ends of their fingers,' they too often did lasting damage with fingers that usually are all thumbs. 'One's self-love is not at all limited to one's specific person,' he complains to Lady Ossory, 'but insinuates itself into everything that belongs to one—to one's house, to one's garden, to one's collection,' and 'feels at each thread, and lives along the line.'

For the very beau-ideal of an antiquary we turn to one of Sir Walter Scott's finest creations. Let us seek him in his own garden, seated under the shade of a holly-tree that has escaped the shears that have trimmed its fellows in quaint device. By some magic the great story-teller, with the simplest words, makes us live in the very scene. We breathe the fresh sunny air blowing off the

North Sea. We hear the ripple and splash of the waves falling and running up the beach, calm and soothing to-day, but we know how terrible they can be when the wind blows. Let us share in the welcome given to the young Lovel, and in the invitation from Monkbarns to follow him up the winding stairs to his *sanctum sanctorum*. When our antiquary has routed his 'good-for-nothing womenkind,' whom he finds so wantonly raising 'the very ancient, peaceful dust that would have remained so for a hundred years had not these gypsies disturbed it, as they would do everything else in this world,' we follow him round his den, stepping cautiously amongst piles of books, old armour, and many strange things, treating them with the more respect when we hear what happened to Dr Heavystern when he sat down too carelessly in that ancient arm-chair, not perceiving that in its recesses lay deadly weapons of iron bearing the alarming name of 'craw-taes.'

After prying into every corner and listening to the many stories woven into the rambling but ever-entertaining conversation of our host, we see him draw aside a bit of old tapestry on which is pictured the ugly face of the Loathly Lady, and unlock a cabinet out of which he brings 'two long-stalked wine-glasses, such as are seen in Tenier's pieces,' and a bottle of what he calls rich, raey canary, with a bit of diet-cake on a small silver salver of exquisite old workmanship. 'I say nothing of the salver,' he remarks, 'though it is said to be wrought by the old mad Florentine, Benvenuto Cellini.'

Surely here it is time for me to lay aside my pen and leave the reader to enjoy undisturbed the company of the Laird of Monkbarns and the gallant young Lovel as they sip the rich, raey canary, and taste Miss Griselda's diet-cake.

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

### CHAPTER XVI.—A HASTY WOOING.



WHEN Vaurel got back we settled our final arrangements. I was to let him know by wire, post, or messenger the exact day, and as nearly as possible the hour, when I should be at the mouth of the river ready to receive the Colonel, and he undertook to be there.

In the early morning we ventured to leave the Colonel in custody of Boulot, and took the wood path past Vaurel's house to the station, in time for the early train to Rennes.

'Tell mademoiselle that we will win if we hold him till he dies, monsieur,' said Vaurel as he wrung my hand and looked as if he were going to embrace me.

I was in Combours by eleven o'clock, and, leaving my baggage at the station, found my way

without difficulty to the Convent of the Sacred Heart.

It stood a short way out of the village, and was a great and unprepossessing establishment, with immensely high walls and an unpretentious door, which, if it suggested no warm welcome to outsiders, certainly gave one the impression that what it held inside was very tightly held indeed. In the middle of the door was a tiny grating closed with a sliding panel, which somehow brought Madame de St Ouen and her downcast eyes vividly to my mind. An iron handle hung from a chain by the side of the tight-lipped door, and I gave it a pull that woke a tinkling response somewhere far away inside.

Time was evidently of little account with the occupants of the convent. It was full five minutes before the blind eye in the door opened noiselessly

and showed me a pale coiffed face behind it, which swallowed me wholly in one hasty glance and then looked down, as though I were the world and the flesh and the devil all rolled into one.

'Madame the Duchesse of St Ouen?' I said in English, and pushed my card through the grating, which closed immediately and left me to hope that something might eventually come of it.

The privilege I sought was evidently one that needed time for consideration, and was not readily accorded. I smoked four horrible 'Caporal' cigarettes before the little veiled eye winked again sufficiently to allow the passage of a folded slip of paper, on which was inscribed in thin wiry letters, 'Madame regrets that she cannot receive M. Lamont.'

I fear the language I used, though I had the sense to keep it below my breath, would not have prospered my cause with the saints inside, as I hung in the wind uncertain what to do next. I smoked several more of the vile little cigarettes, and came to the wise decision of seeking out the *cure* of the village and asking his advice. If he were a decent fellow he might assist me; at the worst he could only refuse.

I found the *cure* without difficulty; and if I had had him made to order he could not have been more to my liking. He was a round-faced, jovial little man of about sixty, by name Père Joseph Bonnatt, and he spoke English fluently with a strong Irish accent, which he explained by the fact of his having lived for several years in the States, and incidentally that his mother was an Irishwoman.

We became good friends immediately, and when I told him of my difficulty he laughed loud and long.

'You expected to walk into the Convent of the Sacred Heart on presentation of your card? Why, my dear young friend, no male foot has ever defiled those sacred precincts save that of the Cardinal Archbishop, Monseigneur Godefroi; and even then I believe the Sisters had all to do penance for a week, besides double scrubbing the floors of every room he entered. But what is it you want there?—or, I should say, who? Not Madame Mère herself?

'No; it is my cousin, Mademoiselle Denise des Comptes, whose affairs I am looking after, and it is absolutely necessary that I should see her.'

'Ah! Mademoiselle des Comptes. That is the wealthy novice whom Madame Mère is hoping to persuade into the order—sister of that young Gaston des Comptes who— Yes, yes, I know all about it. And monsieur is her cousin?'

I nodded without a blush. Had not mademoiselle herself elected me to that high position; and who had a better right? We cannot choose our parents, but we can choose our *soi-disant* cousins.

'I doubt if I can help you in the matter,' said Père Bonnatt, 'though I would very much like

to do so. Madame and I are not on speaking terms. You see, she comes from above, I from below. She is an aristocrat, I spring from the soil. Now, let me see,' he said, biting his thumb in perplexity—'let me see— You did not tell her what you wanted?' he asked suddenly.

'I had no chance to tell her anything. But I guess she knows well enough what I wanted. She was staying with us down at mademoiselle's house at Cour-des-Comptes, with the Abbé Dieufoy.'

'Ah, yes! the Abbé Dieufoy. He is *bon garçon*?' and he looked at me whimsically.

'We got on very well together. He is shrewd and sharp, I should say; but we were on friendly enough terms.'

He nodded, and took counsel with his thumb again. Then he looked up with a twinkle in his eye.

'If I mention a matter to you, M. Lamont, you must not take any undue advantage of it—unless you very much want to.'

'I promise,' I said.

'Well, as I came from the station this morning I met a round dozen of the doves from the big nest there; and among them was a young lady, who was with them, but not of them. Is your cousin a tall girl with brown hair, and rather good-looking?'

'She is the most beautiful girl'— I began, but stopped short at sight of his twinkling eyes.

'It was doubtless she. They were, I judged, going to Dol, where there is a grand fête to the Virgin to-day. Now, if you should happen to be about the station when the train from Dol comes in, you might happen to see your cousin, you know; and who could stop you speaking to her, if you made up your mind to do it, I don't quite know. But, mind you, you are not to make any use of this information unless'—

'What time does the train come in?'

'Four o'clock.'

When the train came in I was waiting for it. The red-tape observances of the larger stations did not obtain in this rural district, and I had been permitted to take up my stand in a secluded corner of the platform without any objections on the part of the officials.

The train was crowded with women and children returning from the fête; but the Combours contingent was not a large one, and from my corner I eagerly watched the Sisters of the Sacred Heart dump themselves down on the platform with all the graceless weight of so many sacks of flour.

How tall and gracious and beautiful mademoiselle looked beside the others, a queen lily in a bed of cabbages, though her sweet face sank into a soberness almost equal to theirs as the train passed and she turned to join her companions.

Then some sudden delightful instinct caused her to look up, right into my corner. If she had known I was there she could not have looked at me straighter, and my heart leaped

joyfully and beat a triumphant march at the sudden glad light that shone out of her eyes and the lovely colour that swept into her face at sight of me.

The Sisters had gathered round her like a bodyguard of protecting hens; but I pushed through them with a '*Pardon, pardon, mademoiselle!*' right and left, and met Denise half-way.

'Oh, Cousin Hugh!' she cried, and blushed deeper still at the word. 'How glad I am to see you!'

'Not more glad than I am—Denise! But I could not come before. Where can I speak with you? I have a great deal to tell you.'

She spoke rapidly to the dourest of the Sisters, whose austere upper lip was ornamented with a slight black moustache, and whose flat bosom was decorated with a larger brass crucifix than any of the others. The Sister pursed her thin lips still tighter and murmured. Mademoiselle insisted, with a touch of anger, that she had a right to speak to her cousin, and that she intended to in any case; and the Sister yielded to the point of permitting half her flock to go on in front of us and half to follow behind, while we two walked together in between.

'Mr Lamont,' said mademoiselle before I had time to begin my story, 'I must get away from here. I am sorry I ever came. It will kill me if I stop much longer. It is not peace—for me at all events—it is imprisonment, and I cannot stand it. This is the first time I have passed the gate since I went there. It is crushing the spirit out of me. I would sooner work for my living and let them have all the money than stop here.'

She poured all this out in a quick, hot torrent that came straight from her heart, and her face and eyes were all aflame with the strong feeling that was in her.

My heart leaped towards her and shouted, 'Come with me! Come with me!' but I managed to keep silent.

'It was a mistake my coming here,' she said again. 'I was afraid of it; but you advised it, and I came. But—but—you promised to help me. You must get me away. Now, what can you do to help?'

'You trust me, Denise?'

'Absolutely! You know I do. More, I'—

I do not know what she was going to say, for she was in a state of very great excitement.

'Then let me take you away for good and all. Come and be my wife.'

'Oh Hugh! do you mean it?' she cried.

'I have meant it since the first moment I

saw your picture in the Salon. You know it, Denise.'

'Yes,' she said in a whisper, 'I knew it.'

She walked in silence for a moment, and then said eagerly, 'When? Now?'

'Can you stand it another week, dearest?' I said; and then I told her rapidly of the position of affairs at Cour-des-Comptes, and of our decision to carry the Colonel off to sea, and to hold him there until he spoke.

'I am going now to Southampton to charter a yacht. I can be back here in a week. The yacht can wait at St Malo. What do you say?'

'I shall count the hours,' she said joyfully. 'I can stand it now.'

'How am I to get at you?' I asked. 'I tried to see Madame Mère, but she declined the pleasure, and the little *cure* here tells me no man is allowed to set foot inside those big walls.'

'And it may be a month before I am allowed outside again. What can we do?'

'I shall manage it somehow. You are quite sure'—

'I am quite sure,' she said quickly.

'And you will be ready when'—

'I shall be ready,' she said; and then, softly and sweetly as we drew near to the convent gate, 'You have made me very happy, Hugh.'

It was surely as strange a wooing as man could well have. I had hardly dared to look at her, and as for touching her hand in the midst of that phalanx of marble modesty, it was not to be thought of for a moment. What pains and penances it might have subjected my dear girl to I could not imagine; but I was very desirous of doing nothing to shock the feelings of her keepers, and when the moment of parting came I did no more than touch the tips of her fingers and looked the rest of all I felt; I then bowed obsequiously to the cold-faced sisterhood, and walked away on air, the richest man in all the world.

I went straight back to Père Bonnatt, and as soon as he saw me he said, '*Eh, bien!* You have seen her?'

'I have seen her and spoken to her, thanks to you.'

'Nay, nay, do not incriminate me,' he laughed; 'though it is a pleasure to me to get round the old lady. She is so very, very good, and so very, very wanting in heart.'

I was strongly tempted to tell him the whole matter, and it would have been such a very great pleasure to talk to somebody of mademoiselle. But I had the common-sense not to do so and maybe it was just as well.



## THE TRANSVAAL OF SOUTH AMERICA.



LET no one imagine, from the title of this article, that the country referred to is rich in gold or diamonds; on the contrary, the mineral wealth of the Transvaal of South America is inconsiderable.

The designation is here applied to the republic of Paraguay on account of its geographical position and past history, which bear many striking points of resemblance to the South African Transvaal.

Like the Transvaal, Paraguay occupies an inland position, surrounded by nations with whom she has waged destructive warfare. Paraguay has still serious disputes with these nations on commercial questions, especially as to tariff duties; for, having no port of her own, she is at the mercy of the countries in possession of the seaboard.

Although the frontiers of Paraguay are ill-defined (being still to a great extent in dispute), and no reliable census of the population has been taken for many years, it may be said that both in size and population the country approximates to the Transvaal; it is situated in precisely the same latitude, and has a similar climate; like the Transvaal, also, the main occupation of the native inhabitants is the rearing of cattle, what trade and manufactures exist being almost entirely in the hands of foreigners.

From an historical standpoint, the similarity is almost equally striking. Like the Transvaal, Paraguay has waged (and for a time successfully) a war of the most sanguinary character against forces which may well be described as overwhelming. The war was fought out to the bitter end; it lasted five years, and ended only after the sheer exhaustion of the Paraguayans, the almost complete extermination of the male inhabitants capable of bearing arms, and the death in battle of their leader.

Paraguay, which once formed part of the vast possessions of the Spaniards in the New World, declared her independence in the year 1811. The reins of power were shortly afterwards seized by the renowned Dr Francia, who constituted himself Dictator, a position which he held until his death in 1840, at the age of eighty-three. Francia was admired by Carlyle, who set him up as one of his heroes; but the description given of the Dictator by Washburn, some time Minister of the United States to Paraguay, is much less flattering. Doubtless Francia was a man of remarkable energy and will-power, and knew how to rule the docile Paraguayans, believing in the maxim enunciated by his successor, Lopez, that terror was a more potent force than so-called patriotism in quelling the unruly element always present in a South American republic. He in-

augurated a system of espionage the most complete perhaps that ever existed in any country; his spies were so numerous that it was scarcely possible for two or three people to meet together in the capital without one of his secret emissaries being among them. Every one distrusted his neighbour; brother suspected brother, the son his father, and the father his son; for no one knew when he might be in the company of a secret agent of the Dictator, ready to report any word inadvertently spoken. Nor was it necessary, to justify arrest, that a man had spoken against that august personage; if any one heard a word spoken unfavourable to Francia and did not immediately denounce the speaker he was held to be equally culpable, and immediately seized and thrown into prison—perhaps even a worse fate might befall him. Francia was held in such terror that even his name was no longer pronounced by the people, and the only designation by which he was known was that of *El Supremo* ('The Supreme One'). It is said that Francia on his deathbed thanked Heaven that he had no enemies—he had shot them all; but the same story is told of more than one South American president, and it is probably as true of one as it is of the other.

The way Francia treated the 'Outlanders' of his time is instructive. He maintained as a principle, and rigidly enforced it, that no foreigners were to be allowed to enter the country. If, by chance, any misguided foreigner did manage to enter the country, he was not permitted to leave, and was kept strictly a prisoner; while it was almost impossible to escape, as the river was the only practicable outlet.

The ill-usage of the celebrated naturalist Bonpland was not creditable to the Dictator. Bonpland was travelling on the frontier of the Argentine Republic, just adjoining the Paraguayan frontier, when he was seized by Francia's order as a spy, and carried prisoner into Paraguay. There he was detained for ten years, when the Dictator, almost without a moment's warning, ordered him to leave the country. It is probable that he was forced to do this by pressure exerted by the French Government, which had long been trying to obtain Bonpland's release.

On the death of Francia the country was plunged into anarchy, the chief power being ultimately seized by a lawyer, Carlos Antonio Lopez, who reigned as a despot for twenty-one years (1841-62). Notwithstanding that his rule, like that of Francia, was despotic, the country was prosperous, as it had also been in Francia's time. Lopez did a great deal to encourage industry; he established arsenals, shipbuilding yards, foundries, and manufactures of various kinds, engaging engineers and skilled mechanics in Europe for these purposes. Many of the steamers employed

in the subsequent war with the allies were built in the shipyards in Asuncion.

On the death of Lopez the First, he was succeeded by his nephew, Francisco Solano Lopez, whose career had so baneful an effect on the destinies of Paraguay. He devised the most ambitious schemes, by which he was to become the Napoleon of South America, annexing the adjacent territories and securing an outlet on the sea for Paraguay. He had no sooner assumed the reins of power than he commenced to make war-like preparations for the invasion of the neighbouring republics. In the year 1865, without warning, he seized some Argentine steamers lying in the river, and so committed the first act of war. When the war broke out Lopez had an army of sixty thousand men and about two hundred pieces of artillery—approximately the same force as the Boers possessed at the commencement of hostilities. He sent a fleet up the river and took possession of the principal towns of Matto Grosso, a large interior province of Brazil, which, being in a peculiarly isolated position and insufficiently garrisoned, could offer little resistance. He then overran the Argentine province of Corrientes, occupying the principal towns, and advancing as far as the Brazilian frontier town of Uruguayana. But he had now reached the end of his tether, for Uruguay and Brazil had joined hands with Argentina, and they had lost no time in collecting troops. Lopez, who had received a severe check at Uruguayana, found his communications threatened, and was forced to retreat. Although the Paraguayans gained some victories at the commencement of the war, the tide soon turned against them, and they were forced to retreat into their own territory. They had still command of the river, the only practicable means of access to Asuncion, the capital of Paraguay; and for many months the allied fleet was kept at bay by the fortress of Humaitá, a series of earthworks under the command of a Scotsman named Thompson, and further strengthened by a boom stretched across the river at this point, which prevented the passage of the warships. At length, one day when the river was in flood, there happened to be sufficient water over the boom to allow the hostile vessels to pass; this they accordingly did, forcing their way past the fort, which was thereafter untenable, and Asuncion itself lay at the mercy of the allies.

The war was by no means closed, however, by the capture of Asuncion, for Lopez now retreated with his army northwards, hotly pursued by the allied troops. During the latter part of the war the hardships suffered by the people were terrible. As all the available able-bodied males had been drafted into the army, no labourers were left to till the fields, and a period of absolute famine supervened. The people were forced to live on wild fruit, insects, and any sustenance which

could be picked up in the woods. Thousands died of famine and disease. They had long before been short of ammunition; but the spirit of the people was unshaken. When no more balls were to be had for their cannon, and scarcely any iron was left in the country, the churches donated their bells, and these, with such balls and scraps of iron as were picked up on the battlefields, were sent to the foundries to be melted down and cast into shot and shell.

The adverse end, however, could not be prevented. After suffering untold hardships, the little band, under the command of Lopez, now reduced to some ten thousand men, reached the banks of the river Aquidaban, in the north of Paraguay. Here, on the 1st of March 1870, they were overtaken by the allied troops. A last stand was made, but unsuccessfully. The men, weakened by hardships, famine, and disease, were unable to make any further resistance, and were eventually surrounded. A party of Brazilians came upon Lopez just as he was preparing to cross the Aquidaban. They called on him to surrender, wishing to capture him alive; but he answered by drawing his revolver and firing on his pursuers, whereupon he was transfixed by a Brazilian lance, and fell in the mud of the river, where he expired—a humiliating end for one who had fought so bravely for his country.


The results of this disastrous war are shown by the following figures: The population of Paraguay, which according to the census of 1857 was 1,337,439, had declined in the year 1873 to 221,079, nearly all women, children, and very old men. Although the losses in battle were terrible, the greater part of this decline was caused by hardships, famine, and disease. Even at the present day, though one meets many old women in Paraguay, very few old men are to be seen; but of course in the younger generation the disparity of sexes is not great.

For many years after the war nearly all the work in Paraguay devolved upon the women, even to the maintenance of order; for female police were not merely a possibility to form material for the comic papers—they were a fact. To this day much of the work that is done by men in other countries is done by women in Paraguay; in the country districts, for example, women are still employed as butchers.

Foreign capital and foreign labour are still needed to develop the vast resources of Paraguay; under their vivifying influence her lost prosperity may be regained, and even surpassed. The Paraguayan Government, well aware of this, recently passed a land-law which is one of the most liberal in the world, and offers special inducements to immigrants. Yet, notwithstanding the genial climate and fertile soil, it is doubtful if the country will ever become a favourite field of emigration for the surplus labour of Great Britain.

## THE MOORISH TREASURE.

## CHAPTER II.

O we not dine to-night with the 150th—I mean “The Duke of Ulswater’s”—eh, Wooly?” asked the Governor of ‘Gib’ of his aide-de-camp a day or two after the latter’s adventure in the cork-woods. ‘Bother these new-fangled names!’ the old gentleman muttered under his thick white moustache. ‘How can a man be expected to remember such rubbish at my age? The service is going to the dogs—that’s the long and short of it—when they send a man into action with a name like that plastered all over him.’

‘Yes, sir; it’s to-night with the Duff—I mean the “East Rottenshire,” sir,’ answered Wooly, narrowly escaping calling the gallant regiment, whose reputation as the old 150th was European, by their newly-acquired name of ‘the Duffers.’ For, to the consternation of the army generally, and the 150th in particular, a new order had lately come into force, for the benefit of the army tailors it was supposed, by which the uniforms had been completely altered and the time-honoured old numbers swept away. Much to their rage, the 150th had been saddled with the appalling and crack-jaw title of ‘The Duke of Ulswater’s Field Fencibles, or East Rottenshire Regiment,’ although they had no connection with either His Grace in the north or that well-known county in the south; and, as the obnoxious order decreed that the initial letter of each word composing the new title should be placed on the shoulder-straps instead of the discarded numbers, the result, as far as the 150th was concerned, had been disastrous. The wretched regiment had been branded by Her Majesty’s War Minister, D.U.F.F.E.R., and as ‘the Duffers’ they speedily became known; even with their old number restored or their title changed, they will be known as long as they exist by that most inappropriate name.

‘Pray see that there is no muddle about my bottle to-night,’ continued the Governor. ‘Really, I can hardly help laughing every time I meet Pooker, he still looks so savage. So do be very careful to-night, Wooly, and see that the butler quite understands my wishes.’ Then, chuckling to himself, the old war-horse strode away to his sanctum, leaving his A.D.C. grinning from ear to ear.

The Governor, having lately returned from England, where he had been summoned to receive an honour given him for past services, had been undergoing a series of dinners given by the civil and military inhabitants of the Rock to celebrate the event. As he was a most abstemious man, the unwonted quantity of wine he was

obliged to swallow night after night at these feasts had caused him much annoyance; and when at last his nose began to display danger-signals, and his liver to rebel, he determined—unknown but to a chosen few—to dodge the bottle somehow. With this laudable object in view, he had hit upon the expedient of having a bottle of toast-and-water prepared at home; and it was Wooly’s duty to arrange with the host of the evening, under a pledge of solemn secrecy of course, that the butler should take charge of the decoction, and, after His Excellency’s glass had been twice filled with champagne, keep it filled for the rest of the evening with his own particular brew. This little ruse had worked admirably on two or three occasions, until at the last dinner, a regimental one, the toast-and-water bottle had somehow or other got astray, and an under-butler (having got hold of it) had unwittingly filled Major Pooker’s glass with the decoction instead of with Pomery and Greno. The rage and astonishment of the bibulous warrior as he lovingly sucked down half a glassful at a gulp may be imagined, and his language was such that— Well, Wooly got all the blame, which he didn’t in the least mind, it being part of an A.D.C.’s duty to act as scape-goat; and old Pooker took to his bed under the stream of garrison chaff that descended on his devoted bald head as soon as the joke became known.

‘Have you ever had an offer for the Moorish Castle, sir?’ asked the Colonel of ‘the Duffers’ of his guest the Governor when, the solid part of the dinner being done with, the mess butler had deftly whisked away the long white slips of tablecloth that ran down each side of the great black-wood table that shone resplendent under its load of massive silver plate and strange enamelled monsters—loot from the Summer Palace, and the pride of ‘the Duffer’ mess.

‘Not in my time, Colonel,’ answered the Governor, ‘although I believe my predecessor had. A very foolish custom, I consider, and only kept up to amuse those silly individuals who still pretend to believe in the existence of the treasure.’

‘Pray what may that be?’ said a fat and pompous person, an M.P. who had arrived in his yacht the previous day, and, being slightly acquainted with the Colonel, had been asked by the latter to dine and meet the Governor. He was now on his way to India, where he hoped to be able to make a collection of doubtful facts on doubtful subjects with which to harass the Government during the next session, and thus work himself into a position of unenviable



notoriety, and was eager to begin at once. 'I should much like—er,' he continued, 'to hear—er—anything tending to demonstrate—er'—

'Certainly, certainly,' broke in the Colonel; 'delighted to tell you all about it, unless His Excellency here would like to— What!—eh? Very well, I'll tell it myself, sir, though I don't believe the yarn any more than you.—You must first of all know, then,' he went on, addressing the M.P., 'that there is a very old tower here some way up the Rock towards the North Front. What!—eh? Don't know the North Front? Well, never mind that; you take it from me that there is a tower on this Rock, and that it's called the Moorish Castle. It's got some enclosed ground round it, and it's all used by the gunners as a store or something of that kind. It was built by the Moors ages ago, a little before our time. What!—eh? Ha! ha! ha! Well, every four or five years or so a dirty old Moor—they're always old and dirty, I'm told, though never the same old party—turns up here at "Gib," the devil knows where from, and demands to see the Governor. If he succeeds—and I believe he sometimes does—he makes a solemn offer to give as many silver dollars as will pave the Alameda—the parade-ground, you know—if he and a small party of friends may have undisturbed possession of the Moorish Castle for three days and nights only. Fact, upon my word, sir. Of course it's supposed that there's a thumping big treasure hidden about there, and that the old gentleman has got hold of the secret of how to get at it. It's quite evident that our friends the gunners don't, for they have nearly pulled the place to pieces grubbing about in their efforts to find it. All blessed nonsense, I say. I'd give 'em the castle to-morrow, and welcome, if I was Gov— What!—eh? No, of course not; only my joke, your Ex. Far too much respect for things for that. Pass the wine, Mr President, please.'

'How very interesting!' said the M.P. 'I really must note the chief points of what appears to me to be a gross case of injustice towards—er—the alien population. Let me see. I think I have gathered the facts accurately, in case I might think it well to ask a question on the subject in the House. You said, I think, Colonel, that the—er—Moors have some silver allymadies that our allies the Gunsters—another tribe, I suppose—have pulled to pieces and hidden away in a pavement half-way up the—er—North Front Castle, I think you said? That is how I understand the matter, which it appears to me I shall be obliged to investigate when I have completed my work in Inja.'

'Heaven help poor Inja, then!' whispered Bob Scarlet, that most irrepressible of subs, to his neighbour. 'If the facts he may annex out there are as accurate as those he has culled from Old Whatty's flowers of speech, I should imagine

that'— Here a vigorous kick under the table, directed with force and precision on Bob's shin, interrupted that youth's disrespectful remarks and saved possible complications. As a rule Scarlet's whisper was as audible as a steam-whistle; and although the younger officers all called their colonel Old Whatty, from his little mannerism of speech, the chief himself was as yet in ignorance of the fact; which was perhaps quite as well for the comfort of his sponsors, for he had his bad moments like the rest of us.

'That was a queer yarn of Old Whatty's,' said Wooly to himself as he leisurely divested himself of his gorgeous trappings that night preparatory to turning in; funny I never heard it before. I wish some of that treasure would come round my way—just enough to pay off those beastly Jews and set me on my legs again, with a good "gee" or two that could gallop, and a little "ready" to carry on with. But, heigh ho! there is no luck about my château; never was as long as I can remember.' Then, the undressing being over, the A.D.C. tumbled into bed to lie and worry over his debts, duns, and difficulties, just as a great many of us have to do, until sleep brought its welcome though temporary oblivion.

'Eight o'clock, sir, and your tea; and beg parding, sir, but I found this 'ere thing in the lining of your old waistkit-pocket, sir; and thinking it might be wable, I mention it, sir.' With that Private John Davie, best and smartest of soldier-servants, slipped out of his master's room, leaving a brimming cold tub on the floor, and a cup of tea, and the 'wable' thing beside it, on the deal table near the A.D.C.'s bed. The 'wable' thing turned out to be the coin, or whatever it was, that had been given to him by the old Moor in the cork-woods, and which, strange to say, he had completely forgotten during a press of social and other duties that had crowded the last few days. As he lay enjoying that blissful five minutes that most of us indulge in between the calling and the upsetting, he turned the thing over in his hands, marvelling at its queer markings and wondering what they meant, and speculating, too, on the possible cause of the great value apparently set on it by its late owner. Of course he saw that it had a certain value in itself, as it was evidently made of gold of a high standard; still, that did not account for the milk in the coco-nut, as he sagely remarked later on when discussing the thing, and the odd designs with which it was graven afforded no clue either. They were utterly unlike anything ever seen on coins, or anything else for that matter; and Wooly was quite at a loss to make head or tail of their meaning.

One face of this strange disc bore the presentment of an animal of some sort, though of what species was hard to decide—it looked more

like a monkey than anything else, Wooly thought; while the other was filled in with a number of deeply-graven little lines, radiating from a small circle in the middle, and twisting, winding, branching, and crossing in endless confusion until they ended at the very margin of the coin. Within this small central circle was a pair of crossed swords or sabres—they were curved, Wooly remarked; and on the extreme edge of the disc he noticed a small oblong device with several dots inside it; while opposite this, on the edge also, was placed a bird with outspread wings and curved beak, intended doubtless to represent an eagle or some other bird of prey.

Worn though the disc was, these things had been deeply cut, and were plainly to be seen. Wooly showed the thing to all and sundry, hoping to elucidate the mystery; for, remembering the dying words of the old Moor, mystery there was connected with it, he felt sure. But even those learned in coins and antiquities of all kinds failed to help him, and he was at last obliged to accept the general opinion that it was only a charm or talisman of some kind, and meant nothing but an example of superstition. 'Niggers believe in all that rot, you know, Sheep'—every one that is not pure white is a nigger to the British subaltern—and you had better melt it down and stand a dinner with the proceeds, was the advice tendered to him by his intimates. Bob Scarlet, of course, had a theory of his own, which was amusing, if nothing else. This young man declared that it was an ancient card counter, used by the Romans or some other sporting nation when gambling. The monkey on one face denoted its value of five hundred pounds, and it was evident that this was the origin of the present slang term for that sum. The bird with outspread wings was the 'oof-bird' about to take to flight, and the oblong thing meant the Roman equivalent for Holloway Prison, wherein those unfortunate gamblers languished when deserted by the bird of fortune. The coin, however, soon ceased to interest, and was presently forgotten entirely. Wooly bored a hole in it, right through Holloway Jail, and hung it on his watch-chain, there to dangle until a time should come for it to play its part in a big gamble indeed: Nature his opponent and his life the stakes.

'Hand a jolly good job over,' said Servant Davie as he stood in his shirt-sleeves some months later, contemplating a neat pile of luggage—the result of his labours—labelled 'Captain Wooly, passenger, London,' which occupied the centre of that officer's room. 'Hand now that the Captain's gone hup the Rock for a last run hand blow before goin' aboard, I'm thinkin' that a run hand a blow would suit me too. But no bloomin' Rock for me. Hoh dear, no! A run to the canteen's good enough for my blow, though I ain't a-going aboard—wuss luck! Hit's

hall very well for 'im to go 'ome hand 'ave three months' leave, hand injoy 'isself; but wot about me? That's wot I wants ter know. Wants ter know, sez I! Not me. Why, I can halmost 'ear that hijit of a sargint at me halready wiv 'is, "Ere, you, Davie! You ain't a-doin' nothink now yer master's hon leave. Wot d'yer think yer grateful country clothes and feeds yer free, gratis, hand for nothink for—eh? Not to gaze hon yer beauty—his it? Wot? You don't belong to this rigement; hain't for duty when yer master's away; hain't a-going to do no guards—eh? That's yer little game—his it? Wot wiv 'arf the men sick, hand the other 'arf hon civil himploy, hand the rest wored hout wiv duty day hand night, d'yer think I'm going for to let yer loaf habout like a horficer? Hoh! you'll see the hadjutant—will yer? Just you try, hand you'll wish you'd never been borned." Then that sargint will put me hon guard next day, hand I dursn't complain; hand when the hadjutant sees me hat guard-mountin', 'e'll say, "Ulloh, sargint! this man ain't fur duty; 'ow's 'e hon guard?" Hand that lying sweep'll han-swer pat as yer please, "Hoh! 'e's a good man, sir, hand seeing as guards was wery 'eavy just now, 'e horffered to take a turn along wiv the rest. A wery good soldier, sir." Hand the hadjutant'll say, "That's a proper spirit, my man. I'll tell yer master when 'e returns, I will." Hand I'll 'ave to look proud hand 'appy, and say, "Thank'e, sir;" hand hall the time I'm cussing 'im hand 'is blarsted rigemint proper down hin my boots. Hoh! I savvy the game. I've 'ad it afore now. Hoh for the life hof a soljee-eer!" Thus grumbling and grunting, Private Davie put on his coat and went off to his beloved canteen to get his blow over before his master's return.

Meanwhile the author of his henchman's approaching woes, dressed in straw hat and flannels, swung gaily up the steep path that led to a ruined tower, called O'Hara's, that occupied the highest point of the Rock. His heart was lighter than it had been for many a day; and as he went he whistled snatches from the last burlesque, written, staged, and played by the 'Gib' Amateur Dramatic Company, of which he was a shining light. 'Jack,' his fox-terrier, skipped round his master every now and then, urging him on to the vain pursuit of imaginary cats, rats, *et hoc genus omne*.

Things were looking quite rosy for the A.D.C. to-day. He had first of all won a couple of good races at the garrison race-meeting the week previous, and made a good sum in consequence in stakes and bets, and with it he had been able to pay some of his more pressing debts. Then the Governor, being free from gout and in a good temper, had offered to dispense with his services for three months and let him go home on leave. So the welcome paragraph beginning

'Captain T. Wooly, A.D.C. to His Ex. the Governor, has been granted leave of absence,' &c., had duly appeared in the garrison orders; and, most important of all, his credit being now good, Old Squarey, the local banker and money-lender, had nobly come to the scratch—at sixty per cent.—and made him a little advance. True, the old fox had taken a charge as security on every penny the A.D.C. would ever inherit from his parents or any one else; and, as these good but tight-fisted people were very wealthy, the money was in reality as safe as the Bank of England. Still, Old Squarey had at first made many objections—to justify his enormous interest—and caused Wooly much anxiety in consequence; but had finally consented, and the robbery had been duly and legally carried out, to the old Jew's secret joy and the improvident A.D.C.'s open satisfaction.

Now, everything having been so nicely arranged, Wooly was taking a last breather up the Rock. He meant to start that very night in the homeward-bound mail-boat that would presently steam into the bay, and leave again about eleven. As he had nothing in particular to do just then, and had four days' cramped life aboard before him, he was giving his legs a stretch and getting all the exercise he could at the last minute.

'Hi, in, Jack! Fetch him out, boy! Hi at him!' he shouted as his dog went bounding about over the short scrub and rough rocky ground of the steep ascent. 'Fetch him along. Hi—hi—hi! after him, then!' he cried in the exuberance of his spirits; adding, as Jack looked inquiringly into his face, 'How I wish there was something in reality for you to chivy!—don't you, old boy?' As he spoke, and as if in answer to his wish, there suddenly appeared, bounding lightly along from boulder to boulder in front of him, a string of large, brown, uncouth-looking creatures that would have considerably startled any one ignorant of this, one of the many wonders of 'Gib.'

'The monkeys, by Jove!' cried Wooly. 'Here! come back, Jack; back—do you hear me, sir?' he shouted, but without avail. For Jack had seen the brutes as soon as his master, and, already excited by his previous wild careerings around, was now full pelt after them as fast as his legs could carry him up the rough slope.

Now, the monkeys are sacred at 'Gib.' They have been there ever since the Rock came into our possession, and how long before that it is impossible to say. How they got on the place is a mystery, although there are endless theories on the subject. One thing is certain: they cannot leave. The only way would be along the narrow strip of neutral ground that joins Gibraltar to the mainland, and that would be quite barred to them by the close chain of sentries that

crosses it from sea to sea at its Spanish end. The smugglers of tobacco are the only people that can get through this living chain, placed there expressly to stop them when night covers their movements; but the monkeys, possessing no coin of any use to the gallant *carabineros*, must perforce remain prisoners. Being thus, as it were, our involuntary guests, they are protected from harm by the most stringent rules and regulations; and woe betide the individual found guilty of killing one of them. They do all that is necessary in that way themselves; for when old age comes to any of them, his friends and relations despatch him off-hand as a useless and quarrelsome member of the tribe. For many years an official record has been kept of the annual increase or decrease in their numbers, which appears to average between twenty and thirty.

Although Wooly had wished for something for Jack to hunt, the very last thing he desired was a monkey-hunt. The orders against molesting the brutes were so clear and precise that it would never do for one of the staff, of all people in the world, to indulge his dog with even a harmless scurry after them. Jack, however, knowing nothing of orders of that sort, was only conscious of the delicious fact that here was really something alive to hunt at last. He argued that his master, when he had urged him on previously, had had his eye on these bounding animals all the time, and that these stern shouts of recall were but part of the game, and not to be taken seriously. So he shut his ears and opened his mouth, and sped away after the chase with a light heart and clear conscience. The last of the flying troop was a big fellow without a tail, and with gray whiskers that gave him a most fierce and human look—exactly like a crusty old uncle of his, Wooly thought. He was evidently the father of the tribe, and, as danger threatened them from the rear, was covering their retreat in a most masterly manner, doing everything in his power to draw the dog's attention away from the others. He snarled and gibbered the whole time, and even threw stones at his enemy, with good intention but indifferent aim. Presently, seeing his family were well on their way to the top of the rock, and safely on the precipitous cliffs of the other side, he came to a halt, backing up against a couple of big boulders that formed a sort of corner, and stood as if he were going to give battle to the dog below him. But Jack, though brave, was small; and a big and furious monkey is no mean antagonist when he turns at bay. So, seeing his master coming up rapidly in support, he contented himself with dancing about in front of his foe, just out of reach of his long arms.

Presently Wooly reached the scene of action above him, puffing and blowing with the combined effects of climbing and cursing Jack at one



and the same time. What was his astonishment to find both animals gone—vanished! Not a sign of dog or monkey was to be seen; but his ear caught a sound, muffled but unmistakable, and he recognised his dog's bark, that appeared to come from the very ground under his feet.

Stooping down and listening, he lifted up a bush that grew out of the earth-filled cleft between the two big rocks, and was not surprised to find underneath its hanging branches a round hole going straight into the slope. He had suspected something of the sort, and it was from this hole that Jack's bark proceeded. But it was scarcely audible now, and it was evident that the dog had gone a long way in; and, as Wooly listened for any signs of a combat, the bark ceased altogether, showing that Jack must have followed his enemy far away into the rock,

unless, indeed, he had met his fate and the reward of disobedience.

Wooly threw himself on the ground, put his head and shoulders into the hole, and shouted long and loudly. But he only succeeded in making himself hoarse without any result. Jack would not or could not come back. The A.D.C. drew back his head and considered. The hole certainly went far in; and if he was to go in after his dog he must first of all get a light. If Jack could not come back, he must be fetched out. He could not be left in the lurch with his foe, to be strangled, perhaps, with those long nervous hands clasped round his throat. Something must be done, and quickly, for the afternoon was getting on, and Jack was to sail that night with his master. But 'there's many a slip'—and Wooly little imagined what was before him ere he trod the liner's decks *en route* for home and beauty.

## THE EMPLOYMENTS OF WOMEN.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

**T**O return to clearer and simpler paths, one wonders why there are not many more women photographers. The lower and more laborious branches of the calling—the colouring, retouching, and mounting—are overstocked and ill-paid; but very few women aspire to studios of their own. Yet the training lies mainly in practice and patience, the 'plant' is not exorbitantly costly, and in many cases the environment could be easily arranged and need not lead far from home. Some of the very best portrait photographers are women; and this is especially so in the United States. From all one hears of the superior tact and charm of women in dealing with the sensitive and with little children, one would imagine that this might be a bright and straight road to competence.

Other trades are constantly suggested to women, and occasionally followed by them; for instance, the hairdresser's craft and that of the florist. The former, we should think, would commend itself to few, and, like the latter and more pleasing avocation, is too much ministrant to the merely luxurious class of the community to be very reliable or satisfactory as a means of livelihood. In deciding on the choice of a handicraft, it should always be asked, Is it so vital to the needs of the commonwealth that it will not be subject to too rapid changes, and will not wholly fail, even in very bad times?

It is strange that women librarians have never become a popular institution in Great Britain. There are poorly-paid female assistants in many public libraries; but, according to the

*Woman's Year-Book*, since 1894 no woman has come prominently forward in the library world. This career seems worthy of consideration, since public libraries are undoubtedly on the increase among us. In the United States there are more women than men as head-librarians; their minimum salary is about the maximum that was ever earned in Great Britain, and some enjoy very large stipends. There they have to go through a two years' course of training; but if any thoroughly well-read girl accepts a humble post in any library here, she will doubtless receive an equally good training in the most practical way, and so be ready to rise to the occasion when it comes. But nobody must hope to succeed in this calling without that genuine love of books which makes one desire to see them as well known and as widely useful as possible. Infinite possibilities of helpful social influence seem to open from such positions; and any woman who secures such a post and does justice to it will surely clear the way for many other women to follow her. Great responsibilities, however, lie on the appointing boards, who are sometimes too apt to be swayed by personal pity or considerations of local nepotism.

Women have always done a fair share of the teaching work of the world. It may be the fashion now to sneer at the incompetence of the old-time governesses, and no words can be too severe concerning some of them; but there were splendid exceptions. It is singular, too, that while many of them felt their duty fully discharged when they had imparted to their pupils certain social graces and manual dexterities, yet the generation that grew up under their wing seems to have had a finer literary taste than

is being developed to-day. Still, our public and Board school scheme has undoubtedly given a vast impetus to women's teaching possibilities. It cannot be expected that new methods—any more than new lands—will straightway have all the mellowness and interest which attach even to the ruins of the old. Longer time will doubtless ameliorate many of the crudities which some now deplore. One hint might well be whispered to all teachers, existing or intending: that they should study how to import their best household manner into school life rather than allow themselves to carry school mannerism into society.

Recent years have seen many new openings for teachers of cooking, laundry-work, sewing, and so forth. These lead to a pleasant, wholesome living under very fair conditions, and they are emphatically a good work, since so many girls seem to have mothers unable or unwilling to train them at home—that 'school of domestic economy' for which the best-equipped class can be but a poor substitute. Yet it may be questioned whether any mere course of training is quite sufficient to qualify such teachers. Ought there not to be sound assurance that they have such grip of their subject that they could themselves live by its practical exercise; and can any such assurance be satisfying save that they have really done this? Apart from the 'knack' such experience would add to their own prowess, would it not help the learners to respect their work as can hardly be the case if they suspect that their teacher herself would think it derogatory to take a place in kitchen or laundry?

From time immemorial women have helped in the smaller commerce, in farm and dairy work, and have made clothes and tended the household. It may be that, after all, women will prove that their new economic independence is safest when rooted in the old fields, however much those old fields may require to be ploughed up by progress and aspiration.

'It is the pride of woman true,' says George Macdonald, 'to cover from the cold.' But dress-making and millinery will scarcely be glorified, as some seem to fancy, because a few impecunious titled women in transparent masquerade choose to take to them. These useful arts will advance in dignity precisely as the mass of women learn that clothing is for use and beauty, not for extravagance and display; and begin to look on fashion as good John Evelyn did when he wrote, 'The universe itself were not beautiful to me without variety. Let men change their habits as often as they please, so the change be for the better.'

It seems worse than cruel to put any thoughtful woman to arduous labour on materials and styles which will be destroyed in a few hours: have we not seen skirts embroidered with sham pearls crashing up when the wearer sat down?

Can a tender-hearted worker rejoice in manipulating 'wings' and 'ospreys' at the behest of hard-hearted employers? Can upright and truthful women be expected to make garments whose very cut is inconsistent with all the needs of healthy and useful living? One might almost as well expect them to sell poison to those who ask it! Girls who think of these things must pause and ponder before they choose avocations which may make their lives a daily blasphemy against their own ideals. Yet it is always possible that a thoroughly expert workwoman, prepared to fortify her principles by contentment with a small income, might not only have a good influence within her working sphere, but might also reap a more immediate harvest. There are already many women who are sick of being urged by their *modistes* to adopt this or that incongruity—or cruelty—because it is 'so fashionable,' and who desire nothing but to get their own ideas practically and gracefully carried out.

Now we come to the great question of 'household tendance.' Perhaps it is not unawares that we use that phrase instead of 'domestic service.' It is not likely that we shall ever have satisfactory hired household tendance until household work is held in higher honour, and not wholly relegated to those who are hired; a view which makes us sanguine that the first appearance of amendment will actually be in the ranks of the general servant—that is, the young woman willing to give help in households where it is really help. As things are, alas! there are households even where only a 'general' is kept of which this is not true. It is such households which have made girls frightened of household tendance. Nor can they respect their work when they know that, sooner than do it for herself, the woman of the employing family will toil out day after day, in sun or slush, to some governess-ship whose emolument will scarcely pay for the maid's board and wage.

The first step towards the elevation of domestic work is that it should be held in honour; and the best way to secure this is that all women do as much as possible of it for themselves. Then they will soon remember that the girls they engage to help cannot be asked to have the same outlook as their great-grandmothers' maids, since they themselves will never resume the stand-points of their great-grandmothers!

Domestic work of every kind has three immense advantages. In it, in place of long probation and costly training, a modest independence can be obtained from the very outset. Unlike most other callings, it will never fail the competent. Domestic labour-saving arrangements and machinery may lighten its burdens, and by reducing its ranks will weed away the degrading competition of the unfit; yet these very arrangements but call for more intelligence and skill in those who must

be responsible for their proper working and care. Finally, instead of having to be relinquished at wifehood and motherhood, it is a direct preparation for those states, especially in the case of girls who eschew large, showy establishments and prefer to be the domestic friend in modest households. In these days domestic helpers are really able to select what kind of place they will take.

Fathers are often found to be reluctant to spend as much on their daughters' start in life as on their sons'. In individual cases this is cruelly unjust; yet it has a reasonable basis. If a father spends some hundreds on making his daughter a doctor, or a considerable sum on making her a Civil servant or a photographer, he naturally asks, 'Is not all this wasted if she gets married?'—as he not unnaturally anticipates that she will. Few men enjoy the prospect of a son-in-law willing to forego a wife's exclusive attention to her family; for indeed an ugly possibility lies in that direction! But if daughters devote themselves to household tendance, either in their own homes or elsewhere, care should be taken that they shall not lack a little dowry to brighten their future, be it either in a dual or a single home.

Nobody who walks observingly through the decent streets of our great cities—and especially of our provincial towns—will deny for a moment that the womanhood of which he catches glimpses in comfortable kitchens is far better and more

hopeful material for the building up of a nation than the wan faces and stunted forms which he finds in workrooms and factories. Factory life itself has been a great agent in changing the status of woman from a home-maker to a wage-taker. It was said to me quite lately in a large city, 'This place is really kept up by female labour.' There was no work for men, beyond what could be done by boys; consequently, when boyhood goes past, the man drops the factory, tries for other employment, fails, marries a factory girl, and, as a rule, lives on her wages. That city was full of degraded men loafing at tavern doors, of crowds of women tramping along with lightless and joyless faces, of hordes of deplorable children crouching in noisome entries. The whole made a brooding cloud of moral, mental, and physical misery, ugliness, and degeneration. Do man's new ways seem better than Nature's old ones?

One must add that many of us are forced into employments which we do not choose. We have simply to take up 'the next thing' which will meet the requirements of duty. Then, to seeing eyes, the patience and fortitude with which many of us 'make the best of it' raises us to the height of martyrdom. For others there is not only a choice, but often even some power to influence the choice of others. While the selection of a life trend is being made, let us strive to get it into line with our ideals of what is true and wholesome, kind and fair.

## CAPE VITICULTURE.

**I**T is generally believed that, on the conclusion of the war in South Africa, many men, reservists and others, will wish to settle down in some nook of the vast southern continent, because of the favourable climatic influences and the wide scope for energy and capital. Reference has frequently been made to the openings for mechanics and skilled labourers of every class; consequently the market may be flooded with these. There are also thousands of clerks, wearied of the cramped-up routine of office-life in English towns, who long for occupation in the fresh, pure air; but little has been said, on their behalf, of the natural resources in fruit and agriculture. Hence this article, in which it is proposed to deal with the past and present circumstances of Cape viticulture.

The vine was first introduced into the Cape during the early days of the Dutch settlements (1653), the choicest specimens being from France and the Rhine; and in later years the exiled French Huguenots brought their knowledge to bear on the matter of cultivation. The first districts to be planted were those of the Cape, Paarl,

and Stellenbosch, which, with the addition of Caledon and Malmesbury, constitute to this day the finest vineyards of the country; and of these districts the group of Constantia farms is the gem, producing the dry and sweet wines known by that name. Situated about ten miles from Capetown, and lying just under the range of hills which are the continuation of Table Mountain, they all enjoy the proper southerly aspect; the soil, like that of the other coast districts mentioned, consisting chiefly of decomposed granite, with only an inconsiderable quantity of lime. There are no frosts. The rainfall is usually in the winter months of May, June, and July; in the spring there is sufficient moisture in both soil and atmosphere for the growth of the grape; and later on, in January, February, and March, when the fruit is ripening, rain seldom falls. Consequently the vine flourishes there under most favourable conditions, and, as a result, the wines attain a greater delicacy of flavour than those made inland.

At one time Constantia wines were widely known and appreciated throughout Europe; but their popularity has vastly diminished of late



years, chiefly owing to three causes: the increasing carelessness in their manufacture, the demand for lighter wines, and the repeal of the preferential wine-duties in favour of the colonies as against the Continental wine-growing countries.

With a view to improving this state of affairs, when, in 1885, the colonial wine-trade was very depressed, the Cape Government bought the fine estate of Groot Constantia, and converted it into a Viticultural College for the instruction of sons of wine-farmers in modern methods. Groot Constantia originally belonged to the early Dutch Governor, Van der Stell, who was remarkably proficient in annexing or acquiring any part or parcel of Lands of Promise. From him it passed into the Cloete family, who sold it to the Government. There were about one hundred thousand vines on the property, cultivated on the low bush principle universal at the Cape. The Viticultural College, however, was not a success. In the first place, the Dutch wine-farmers had no great desire to learn scientific processes or new methods, and looked on the innovations of the newly-imported Continental experts with contempt; while the experts, failing to pay sufficient attention to the different climatic conditions of a country entirely new to them, made mistakes which only served to confirm the opinions of their critics. After some years, therefore, the Government very wisely removed the school to Stellenbosch, and amalgamated it with the Agricultural College there.

The wines known as Constantia are obtained by stopping the natural fermentation of the 'must' or juice, either by the addition of alcohol or sugar, or by allowing the grapes to be so ripe when gathered as to contain a percentage of sugar sufficient to arrest fermentation. Red and white Muscatel, Frontignac, and Pontac grapes are chiefly used in the making of Constantia. In some cases the grapes are allowed to become raisins before they are pressed. Although this class of wine is made in most parts of the colony, it everywhere bears the name of Constantia, from the district where it was originally made.

It is now admitted that the attempt to make light wines from grapes more suitable for heavy sweet wines is a mistake; yet palatable light wines, both red and white, are made in many districts. For this the grapes are gathered when they contain about 18 to 20 per cent. of sugar, then crushed and allowed to ferment. In making red wines, the juice is allowed to ferment on the husks in order to extract the colour. Some of the most important colonial wine-merchants make a practice of buying the 'must' from the farmers ready pressed; then the racking, &c., after fermentation is done under their own surveillance. In the making of light wines the varieties of grapes used are Sauvignon blanc, Cabernet sauvignon, Pontac,

Hermitage (French grape), Stein, green grape, and Haanepoot. The latter is a large, fleshy grape of the Muscat species, and is in much request for table use.

The amount of wine obtained per thousand vines in the coast district is from one to one and a half leaguers—a leaguer being one hundred and twenty-seven imperial gallons. Most of the brandy in this district is very rudely distilled from the *dopper* or husks of the grapes after the 'must' has been extracted.

The time of pressing extends from January to April, according to locality. Under the old régime the grapes were taken in mule-carts from the vineyards to the cellars—the cellars being above ground, with thatched roofs; the grapes were then placed in tubs, and coloured men with bare limbs tramped out the juice, chanting bacchanal songs the while. It is claimed that the sole of the foot, being elastic, does not crush the seeds of the grape as the grape-mill does; therefore there is no taste of tannin imparted by the process, and any impurities are removed in the after-fermentation of the 'must.' Nowadays mills, presses, and closed fermentation are the rule; whereas the primitive wine-farmer used open vats, regardless of atmospheric influences and change of temperature.

In 1886 phylloxera, the vine-pest, made its appearance at the Cape; and since then many fruitful vineyards have been completely sacrificed, particularly some in the Paarl and Stellenbosch divisions. After this heavy loss many old farmers were unable to start afresh, and when possible sold their farms. These were taken up by newcomers, who grafted European vines on to American stocks, the latter being phylloxera-proof. These farms are not of such large extent as the farms in the interior. They average about two hundred and fifty morgen—that is, five hundred acres; but nearly all this is arable land, and little stock is held. In the neighbourhood of Malmesbury and Caledon agriculture, vine-growing, and stock-raising are combined on the larger farms.

Manual labour on a Cape wine-farm is mainly done by a mixture of races called Cape-men. They are excellent servants; but it is to be regretted that drunkenness has of late years greatly demoralised them. This is probably due to the custom of giving each man, woman, and child on the estate a large ration of wine daily. Appalling, however, are the effects of the vile new brandy known as 'Cape smoke,' which could be obtained for a mere trifle, as the Afrikander Bond, with a view to conciliating the Dutch wine-farmer, succeeded in preventing any excise on brandies made from the grape. However, like all South African products, the price even of this liquid poison has gone up enormously. Twenty years ago the writer recollects that sixpence was a good price for seven bottles of a

really fair *vin ordinaire* in Capetown. In the last decade the demand from natives working in the gold, coal, and diamond fields for strong drink has led to all rough wine being converted into brandy; and the disgrace of being able only to produce a liquor fit for Kaffirs, and having to be largely protected in so doing, will, it is hoped, stimulate new arrivals at the Cape to attempt better things. Improved methods of distilling and longer time allowed in maturing will do much to eliminate the fusel-oil so largely found in Cape 'dop' brandy.

Leaving the coast districts, we find around Worcester, Montagu, Robertson, Ladysmith, and Oudtshoorn vineyards remarkable for great fertility, from two to four leaguers of wine being obtained per thousand vines. This is due to the soil being of marl or calcareous clay, very often alluvial. As the rainfall is less than at the coast and the soil retains little moisture, irrigation is resorted to. This, combined with the greater heat at pressing-time, which ripens the grapes less gradually and has a prejudicial effect on the fermentation of the 'must,' renders it impossible to produce wine equal in quality to that made farther south. The loss in quality is, however, made up in quantity; and almost all the wine extracted is made into brandy. In many cases, too, brandy is distilled from the whole grape, and is considered highly superior to that made from the husks alone. Connoisseurs rank this even higher than the imported whisky so largely consumed, provided it is allowed to mature in wood. Quantities of grapes are annually turned into raisins. It is pleasant to note an improvement in the quality of these, which at all times command remunerative prices; and well indeed they may, while imported table raisins and sultanas are two shillings and one and sixpence per pound.

The railway to the interior runs through the heart of the vine country, so the farmers have no difficulty in disposing of their table grapes *en bloc* to traders, who collect and forward them in vast quantities to Johannesburg, Rhodesia, and other parts, where—thanks to the admirable arrangements on the Cape Government Railway system—they arrive after fifty-six or seventy hours' journey in fine marketable condition. When one reflects that ten tons of dessert grapes were sent up on the relief of Kimberley to refresh the populace, home-keeping folks will form some idea of the enormous scope of cultivation of so luscious and profitable a fruit.

In the eastern provinces, particularly the district of Graaf-Reinet, brandy is made to some extent; but the summer rains and sometimes heavy frosts occurring in late spring render the industry a more risky undertaking than in the milder west.

It is safe, however, to say that in the regenerated South Africa viticulture will have a grand future.

Given a great influx of Europeans and any intelligent up-to-date viticulturists, a better class of wine will be made, which will always find a ready sale in such a thirsty climate, if commanding little attention farther afield. Every circumstance is favourable; for, with good soil and perfect climate, the yield of the vineyards exceeds that of any other wine-producing country. The immigrant will naturally have to adapt himself to varied economic and climatic conditions; but experience will be his best teacher, and the results far from disappointing.

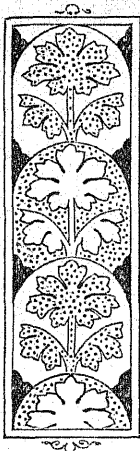
#### COMING HOME.

THERE'S a valley in the west world, and a river rippling free,  
Ever singing in the sunlight as it hurries to the sea;  
And I think of it with longing, I remember it with tears,  
For the echo of its music brings me back the vanished years.  
Sing thy song, O running river! I am coming home to thee,  
To the valley in the west world where you watch and wait for me;  
Fast as rushing winds can bring me and a ship can cross the sea,  
O my river in the west world! I am coming home to thee.

There's a cottage in the west world, with its jasmine-hidden door  
Ever open, as if waiting for my step to come once more.  
I can see it in my dreaming, though I'm far across the foam;  
For the heart finds many dwellings, but there's only one is Home!  
Open wide, dear cottage doorway! I am coming home to thee,  
To a threshold in the west world that is waiting yet for me.  
Fast as rushing winds can bring me and a ship can cross the sea,  
O my cottage in the west world! I am coming home to thee.

There's a true heart in the west world that is beating still for me,  
Ever praying in the twilight once again my face to see.  
Oh! the world is good and glad some, with its love both east and west;  
But there's ever one love only that is still the first and best!  
Pray for me, true heart and loving; I am coming home to thee,  
To my old home in the west world, and the place that waits for me;  
Fast as rushing winds can bring me and a ship can cross the sea,  
O my true heart in the west world! I am coming home to thee.

CLIFTON BINGHAM.



# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### THE APPLICATION OF ELECTRICITY FOR DOMESTIC PURPOSES.

By A. T. STEWART, A.I.E.E., Author of *Electricity Simplified*.\*



IT is scarcely necessary nowadays to detail the inestimable advantages which electricity as an illuminant possesses over gas and oil; but unfortunately these advantages, in many cases, although well known, are only appreciated by those who have made use of it in their homes. When we consider the extensive use of gas for lighting and other purposes, electricity as an illuminant may be said to be only in its infancy. It is probable, however, owing to the rapid increase of the use of electric light during the last few years, that, in the more important towns at all events, electricity will soon entirely supersede gas as an illuminant. It is often asserted that gas, even if superseded as an illuminant, will still have opportunities of triumphing over its rival in the work of heating and cooking; but those who hold this opinion have failed to appreciate how efficiently electricity can also be employed for these and similar purposes.

The most important benefit to be derived by the substitution of electric light for gas or oil is that it possesses hygienic advantages of great value. No longer need we inhale air impregnated with the noxious fumes produced by the combustion of coal-gas, nor be disgusted by the offensive smell of the oil which exhales from the imperfect lamp; and the dangers of explosion and suffocation by gas and of fire caused by oil-lamps are too well known to require more than a passing reference here.

We are now quite familiar with the pleasant, mellow light of the electric incandescent lamp; and it gives a brighter, clearer light than gas. Enclosed in its air-tight globe, no good air can be consumed nor bad air given off—a fact which is

itself of sufficiently vital importance to warrant its adoption. An objection has frequently been urged by those who have had no experience of electric lighting that there is a risk of fire in the event of the breakage of a lamp. This fear, however, has no foundation; for if the globe enclosing the filament should be broken, thus allowing the air to get in, the filament of the lamp is instantly consumed and the light extinguished. There are many other advantages to be claimed for the use of electric light; but those enumerated will be sufficient to convince the wavering of its superiority as an illuminant over gas and oil.

When a householder is aware that the cables of a supply company pass within twenty yards of his premises, he may call upon the company to bring the cables to the nearest point these pass; and the company will be bound to do so free of charge on his guaranteeing for a period of two years to pay for such an amount of current as shall, at the price charged by the company, amount to 20 per cent. on the outlay. As the cost of this is not likely to exceed thirty pounds, the obligation will not be considered an obstacle to the adoption of the electric light, as it is hardly likely that any one requiring cables to be laid for his particular use will consume less than, say, seven pounds' worth of current yearly. However, if the cables are already laid in the street where the premises to be lighted are situated, no guarantee is required. In the case of those who live in flats, the whole building is regarded as being the 'consumer's premises,' and the cables are only brought by the supply company to a point just within such building. The cost of providing cables to the top floor, to enable occupants of flats to run branches thereto, should be borne by the owner of the building.

In the event of an intending consumer finding —by reason of his premises being at a distance from a cable of the supply company—that the

\* A new and enlarged edition of *Electricity Simplified* has just been issued by Messrs W. & R. Chambers, Ltd.



initial outlay for bringing the current to his house would fall too heavily upon him, he could apply to the company for a requisition-form, for the signature of neighbours who would also guarantee to share this amount of initial outlay. In such cases, the cables may be, and frequently are, laid free of charge.

Having obtained from the supply company a form of application for current, the next step will be to ascertain the number of lights required. One 16-candle-power lamp is usually found sufficient for a room about nine feet long and eight feet wide, the lamp being suspended about seven feet from the floor. It is at once apparent that this rule must be subject to many variations in accordance with the papering, drapery, and general circumstances of each room. It is a very common experience to find such exaggerated ideas have been formed of the brilliancy of electric light that sometimes two or three 8-candle-power lamps have been considered sufficient for lighting a good-sized dining-room. Once, in the writer's experience, great disappointment was expressed by a consumer who in a large residential establishment had substituted one hundred electric lamps of 16 and 8-candle-power for upwards of eight hundred gas jets.

In the public rooms of private houses it is generally advisable to have more lights installed than are actually necessary for efficient lighting, in order to admit of decorative effect when occasion requires. These, of course, should have separate switches to admit of their being used only when desired. In a sitting-room or smoking-room it is a source of convenience—in fact, a luxury—to be able to take a portable standard to any part of the room. This convenience can be had by means of a permanent connection on the wall or the skirting-board, to which a flexible wire is attached and also to the portable standard, the technical name for which is a 'wall-plug.' To admit of this convenience, the expense of wiring the room will have to be increased; but, on the other hand, it will frequently occur, when one good light alone—provided it be obtainable at the exact spot required—will suffice, that a considerable saving in current can be effected by dispensing with the use of all the fixed lights.

The question of wiring the building is an important one. To employ an unscrupulous or ignorant contractor to execute this work is to invite endless trouble and expense in the future, as well as danger; whereas, if this work is well done at first, electricity will be found the safest illuminant ever used. It is but fair to many conscientious contractors to state that the demand for cheap wiring has generally been the prime factor in cases where trouble has arisen in connection with electric lighting. However, the interior wiring of buildings is now so well understood that there is no excuse for defects,

provided always that a fair price is paid for the execution of the work. It is not proposed to enter into the various details here;\* let it suffice to state that an exceptionally low estimate should always be regarded with suspicion, as no firm of even moderate standing will undertake to carry out wiring at prices which, in order to admit of a profit, must necessitate the use of inferior material and workmanship.

The question most frequently asked by an intending consumer of electric light is: How does the cost compare with gas? Experts are unfortunately not agreed on this point, and but few consumers of electricity have as yet taken the trouble to keep a correct note of results extending over a sufficient period to afford reliable data. Light for light, it is probably true that, in towns where the Board of Trade unit is over fourpence and the gas three shillings per one thousand cubic feet or under, electricity is a little dearer.

In many cases of supposed overcharge for electric energy, inquiry has shown that the consumer finds the electric light dearer owing to the fact that he has about three times the amount of light he had previously. In a house which has been newly decorated, and where a small 5-candle-power gas-burner had previously given light, a 16-candle-power incandescent lamp is now fixed in a large obscured shade. This is no exaggeration, as it is invariably found that people adopting electric light are determined to have their rooms well lighted, and will not be content with the inferior illumination they had been accustomed to.

The arrangement of the switches plays an important part in the economical working of electric light. If these admit only of groups of lamps being turned off and on, the account for current is sure to be an unpleasant surprise; whereas, if a switch be provided for every light, or nearly every one, the expense of electric light as compared with gas will be found not to bear the great disproportion supposed to exist.

It will always be found convenient and economical to have a switch controlling a single light placed on the wall close to the door of each room; a room may thus be lighted before entering, which prevents the usual performance of stumbling over chairs and barking the shins. Servants, unless specially cautioned, are found very careless with the use of electric light while cleaning rooms in the morning; and this is specially applicable to business premises, where it is invariably found that the lights are left burning until within a short time of the offices being occupied. With a little thought and care there are numerous ways in which the quarterly bill

\* The matter of wiring buildings, as also the facts relating to the cost of electricity, will be found fully detailed in *Electricity Simplified*.

for electric lighting may be kept within reasonable limits. The switches can be used with a key; this makes it impossible for any one except the holder of a key to turn on the light.

In the event of a consumer having reason to think he is overcharged owing to the meter not registering correctly, he can personally test the meter in the following manner: A certain number of lights should be turned on for a time—say, twelve 16-candle-power lamps for a period of two hours—when the advance on the meter should be accurately taken. Then another test should be made with half the number of lamps for double the time, and the advance on the meter again noted. A very simple calculation will now give the desired result, and show if the meter is recording accurately.

It is very frequently asked if there is any possibility of electric light becoming cheaper. The answer to this query depends on a great many factors, the chief being whether and when electricity will come to be generally used for the distribution of mechanical power, cooking, and heating. The reduction of the cost of electricity is very much ruled by the consumption. Thus, if the owners of factories, printing-works, &c., would avail themselves of its use for motive-power, the supply company's machinery, which is to a certain extent idle during the day, would then necessarily require to be constantly running for driving the electric motors; therefore, the company could undoubtedly afford to reduce the price to users of electricity for lighting purposes. However interesting comparisons with gas may be made for the purpose of calculation, daily experience affords evidence that the price of gas has no more influence on the price of electric light than that of candles over oil. People continued the use of gas owing to its superiority while the price of oil has been continually declining. For the same reason people will continue to use electric light, even although the price of gas is reduced in the future.

#### ELECTRIC MOTIVE-POWER.

To some people the information may seem quite a revelation that the same current which gives light when switched on to an electric lamp causes an electric motor to revolve rapidly when it is switched on in an equally simple manner, and thus renders available in their own homes the same power as was hitherto only obtainable when a gas-engine was used. The connection to the motor from the cables—provided only a small motor is required—is exactly the same as that of a portable standard lamp—namely, by means of the flexible wire attached to the motor and the wall-plug, which may be fixed at a nominal cost. Such a connection in the case of a lamp would cause light to be produced, while in that of an electric motor a rotary motion is set up, which renders the power suitable for numerous domestic

purposes, such as organ and harmonium playing, the turning of knife-cleaning machines, sewing machines, butter churns, mangles, boot-polishing machines, ventilating-fans; in fact, there is hardly any limit to the use which may be made of electric motors for household purposes. While the electric supply companies are daily so busy connecting house after house for electric lighting they are unable to direct sufficient attention to the supply of electric power; but as soon as orders for lighting connections begin to slacken, the financial advantages to be obtained will cause them to turn their attention more energetically to the introduction and use of small motors for the supply of power. We are sometimes apt to be over-sanguine on the advent of an enterprise; yet it may safely be predicted that for every unit of electricity now consumed for lighting purposes, ten units will be used for power five years hence.

#### ELECTRIC HEATING AND COOKING.

The novelty of an invention does not constitute its value so much as the fitness of its application; and in this respect electricity as a means of heating and cooking has undoubtedly many advantages. To many the very idea of electricity heating seems almost a paradox. Electricity has of late been chiefly associated in the public mind with lighting; and, in the opinion of many, one of its principal advantages over gas has been the absence of heat. In the incandescent lamp, however, there is heat—white heat in fact; but owing to the lamp being enclosed in a vacuum the heat does not radiate.

Every additional use to which electricity can be put, increasing as it does the annual consumption of current, increases the revenue of the supply company's undertaking, and consequently admits of the current being supplied at a more moderate price. The quantity of current consumed by a small motor for driving a coffee-mill, knife-cleaner, or even a larger machine used for a dinner-lift, is very small indeed; but the general adoption of small electric motors, heaters, and similar useful domestic apparatus, will greatly help to reduce the cost at which electricity can be produced profitably for lighting purposes.

An efficient method of cooking, if always to be the best, cannot continue to be the same; yet the operations of cooking at the present time have in many details continued unchanged from time immemorial. We yield to custom as we bow to fate; but in the course of changing years we have improved many things, and it now appears that our methods of cooking are about to be revolutionised and improved by the use of an energy which has already been the means of effecting other important changes.

The electric oven roasts and bakes to perfection, and it also possesses many advantages which, prior to the introduction of electric heating, were considered impossible. The greatest of these is that the food is cooked in a pure atmos-

phers, with no smoke, smell, or dust, thus doing away with the necessity of a flue. The heat can be regulated to any degree and distributed throughout every part of the oven as desired, by merely turning on switches. In about twenty minutes the oven can be heated to a temperature of over four hundred degrees Fahrenheit, with all switches on. After the necessary heat is obtained, several of the switches may be turned off and the cooking done with less current, as no heated air need escape up a chimney or through a ventilation-pipe, as is the case with gas. The oven is in some respects similar to that of a baker's, which, when heated early in the morning, has afterwards to work by means of the heat retained. Very little heat is lost in radiation, and the whole of the heat generated is utilised in the interior of the oven. The amount of electricity required to heat it in the first instance may be twice as much as gas or coal, yet the cost in maintaining the heat is only half.

The electric girdle is also very convenient for frying eggs, pancakes, and similar dishes. It is only necessary to turn the current on for about two minutes before commencing to cook, and immediately the cooking is finished the current may be switched off and waste prevented.

In the electric stewpan two or three separate switches are arranged, so that any desired degree

of heat may be obtained, even suitable to the simmering process.

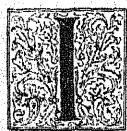
The electric curling-tongs may be heated to about three hundred and fifty degrees Fahrenheit in two minutes. Flat-irons, coffee-pots, and other household apparatus are now manufactured, and may be purchased from the firm employed for fitting up the electric light. There are also many other useful devices—such as electric radiators, and cigar and pipe lighters, &c.

The most economical results can hardly be expected in the early days of such an enterprise; but it has already been successfully demonstrated that many processes of heating and cooking can be carried on as cheaply as with gas. There can be no doubt, however, that on a large scale electric heating or cooking is too expensive to admit of its general adoption.

These inventions and improvements are attractive; but unfortunately their adoption has been delayed owing to the expense. Now, however, that this stumbling-block has been—or soon will be—removed, it is to be hoped that heating and cooking by electricity will be generally adopted with less delay than some may imagine. It is even now thought by many who have turned their attention to this special branch of electrical engineering that the time is not far distant when electric heaters will come into general use.

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

### CHAPTER XVII.—PRELIMINARIES.



**I** WAS fortunate in my quest at Southampton. Butlers, the yacht agents, had had a fine two-hundred-ton schooner yacht, sail and steam, placed in their hands only the day before. It belonged to young Lord

Derrismore, who had started in her for a cruise in the Mediterranean, but had fallen in with an American millionairess at Nice; so he had thrown up his cruise for more lucrative business on shore, and sent the boat home in charge of her captain, with instructions to Butlers to let her for six months if they could.

She was a very handsome and roomy boat, beautifully fitted, and well found in every respect, and her crew were mostly willing to sign on for a new cruise in place of the one that had fallen through. She was called the *Clutha*, and her captain was a young Scot hailing from Port-Glasgow, by name Andrew Lyle, a fine bright fellow, to whom I took a great liking. So I signed the agreements and left Lyle to get her ready for a long voyage, and then ran up to town.

I had been puzzling my brain ever since I parted from mademoiselle as to the best way of getting her out of the clutches of Madame de

St Ouen, and I had at last hit upon a scheme which seemed to me to be at least possible. But it required legal assistance to carry it through, and I went straight to Mr George Dayrell, of Lincoln's Inn Fields, who was the London agent of Laytons of Liverpool, and with whom I had had some dealings before I left England. He was a tall, strapping, jovial fellow, with a merry laugh and more of the look of a cavalry officer than of a solicitor, and he was just the man to further my plans, I thought.

He welcomed me very heartily, and was immensely interested in all my doings. He begged me to dine with him at his club that night, and after dinner, over coffee and cigars in the most secluded corner of a cosy little smoking-room upstairs, I told him such portion of my story as I deemed necessary, and developed my plans.

'You want to rob a convent of its brightest ornament'—he began.

'But she is only there in trust, so to speak. She has not joined the order.'

'Quite so; but they are, I presume, just as desirous of keeping the young lady in as you are of getting her out, and you want me to help you to get her out. It appeals to me strongly, and



I don't think your plan can be improved on. It may slip up, of course; but on the other hand it has every chance of success, and I don't see any better one. I know some parts of the country about there. If I were you I should drive over from St Servan. If you have to hang about waiting for trains it might be awkward—don't you know? You leave the documents to me. I'll draw them up such a screed as will twist their brains into a knot if they try to make head or tail of it, and I'll cover it with seals till a country notary will bow down and worship it. Oh, I'll fix that part all right. I'd mighty well like to go along and see the fun.'

'It might not be a bad idea,' I said. 'Think it over. I must start from Southampton on Wednesday. You could bully the notary and make him do what is wanted.'

'Yes, I'll go! I wouldn't miss it for fifty pounds. I've nothing important on this week, and it'll be as good as a pantomime.'

'There is one other matter I want you to see to for me, Dayrell.'

'Yes?'

'I want a special license.'

'That's easy. Doctors' Commons—fee twenty-nine pounds eight shillings. Come along to the office in the morning and we'll trot round and get it. This is the kind of job I like. Smack of Gretna Green about it—don't you know? Young lady of age?'

'I'm sure I don't know. Suppose we assume it.'

'Parents living?'

'No—both dead.'

'That's better—from this particular point of view, I mean. They're particular on the French side as to parents' consent, you know.'

We ran down to Southampton on the Tuesday afternoon and found the preparations on the *Clutha* approaching completion.

Dayrell was delighted with the look of her. 'She's a beauty, and no mistake,' he said. 'Say, Lamont, she makes me wish I was going along with you afterwards.'

'And what about the anxious clients cooling their heels in Lincoln's Inn Fields?' I said.

'Oh, hang the clients! It'd give them time to think better of it, and not make fools of themselves.'

We made an early start and a quick run across, and by eight o'clock in the evening were lying at anchor outside the mole of St Malo.

'Let's go ashore at once. I want to hunt up a notary,' said Dayrell. 'I want him to write to-night to the Mother Superior making an appointment for Mademoiselle des Comptes for to-morrow morning. I'll fix the time as soon as I can get hold of a time-table and find out when there's no train back from Combours to this place.'

We went straight to the offices of the South-Western Railway Company, and Dayrell, putting

on his most impressive legal manner, inquired the name of the leading notary in the town.

The clerk mentioned several.

'Do any of them speak English, I wonder?' said Dayrell. 'This is a matter of some importance, and I can't afford to have any misunderstandings.'

'M. Lanoë speaks English well. He doesn't perhaps stand quite so high as M. Lecompte; but M. Lecompte unfortunately neither speaks nor writes English.'

'Thanks. M. Lanoë is evidently the man, but I may as well have both addresses in case one of them should not be available.' And we went straight to M. Lecompte.

He was elderly, extremely polished in his manners, and—he didn't understand a word of English.

Dayrell clothed himself in impressiveness and legalities. He spoke French admirably, and explained what we wanted clearly and distinctly, and the old gentleman took the job in hand with extreme willingness.

'Mademoiselle des Comptes,' said Dayrell, 'who is at present, we are informed, staying with Madame the Duchesse de St Ouen, the Mother Superior of the Convent of the Sacred Heart at Combours, is, as monsieur is doubtless aware, of English extraction on her mother's side. These documents'—he flourished his roll of parchments, which looked extremely formidable, with black-letter inscriptions bristling up amid the neatly engrossed text, and massive red seals dangling by green ribbons—'these documents are of extreme importance, and have to be signed by mademoiselle in person in presence of a notary of standing.' M. Lecompte bowed. 'The matter is somewhat urgent, and expense is no obstacle. If, therefore, M. Lecompte, you can make it convenient to come over to Combours with me to-morrow morning, I would ask you to write at once to Madame the Duchesse requesting her to permit you to meet mademoiselle. Now, where can you transact the business? Is there a notary at Combours, I wonder?'

'No!' said M. Lecompte with a decisive shake of the head. 'There is not.'

'H'm! then where—? Mademoiselle cannot well sign in the roadway.'

'There is the inn,' suggested M. Lecompte.

'Of course; that will do quite well. Will you then, M. Lecompte, have the extreme kindness to write at once explaining the matter to madame, and saying that you will await mademoiselle at the inn at—what time shall we say?'

'There is a train about half-past twelve, getting there about half-past one.'

'Then suppose we say two o'clock at the inn. I wonder what time there is a train back.'

'There is no train back till five o'clock,' said M. Lecompte, consulting his time-table.

'Ah! Then it practically means the whole day,

and the steamer leaves at eight. Well, that will do very well. We can get our business done and get away to-morrow night,' he said, looking significantly at me.

'I will write at once,' said M. Lecompte. 'The post has gone; but my letter will reach madame by the early morning train, and she will have it by eight o'clock.'

'That is no doubt as early as madame is likely to be up.'

'But no,' said the old gentleman, with a smile and a gentle shrug; 'madame is extremely devout. She is doubtless at her devotions each morning by five.'

'You know madame personally then, monsieur?'

'Oh yes. I have transacted business for madame on several occasions.'

'So much the better for us,' said Dayrell, as we walked back to the harbour; 'madame will raise no questions and have no doubts, and mademoiselle will be there all right. We will hire a carriage and pair in the morning,' he said. 'Will you drive?'

'Certainly. I can manage that all right. How about finding the way?'

'Start about eleven and you will have heaps of time and can inquire all you want, and give the horses a good rest at the other end. I shall of course come back with you. We must get on board at once and scoot. As soon as they tumble to it, and recover their wits, they will no doubt set the telegraph to work and be on the look-out for us. Where will your boat meet us?'

'Up near the station, I think. I'm told there is a good livery stable in St Servan.'

'We'll try it. You've got the young lady's rig-out and picked your man?'

'Didn't you notice him on board? I had him engaged on purpose.'

'That slim, smooth-faced young fellow with brown hair? I remember him. Well, it'll be touch and go, and there must be no hitches.'

'If mademoiselle comes to the inn she shall never go back to the convent if I have to tie them all to tables and chairs while I walk away with her.'


'I will settle with the old gentleman as we go down,' said Dayrell, 'and I'll make the fee so big that he won't feel hurt whatever happens. He'll have no difficulty in proving that he knew nothing about it. Lyle will be ready to up-steam and off the moment we get on board of course?'

'He'll be ready; and I'll bless the moment mademoiselle sets foot on the *Clutha*.'

I had had the portrait of 'Mlle. X.' framed during my short stay in town, and it hung now in the saloon; and as I went down I stood before it glancing in the straight shy glance of the steadfast eyes, and vowed by all that I held most sacred—and that was my love for my love—that never, from word or thought or deed,

should she have cause to rue the day she placed her faith in me and her hand in mine.

#### CHAPTER XVIII.—A SAILOR-BOY MY LOVE WAS SHE.

Y first visit next morning was to the telegraph office, where I sent this message to Prudent Vaurel, Château des Comptes, Cour-des-Comptes: 'Sunday morning—six o'clock.' As arranged between us, he would understand that by that time I should be off the mouth of the river awaiting him and his prisoner.

As a matter of fact, I expected to be there by six o'clock on Saturday afternoon; but it seemed to me better that he should travel by night, as being less exposed to inquisition, and in any case it would not do for him to be awaiting us, whereas we could wait for him without inconvenience.

Then to the St Servan stables, where, by leaving a substantial deposit, I was able to secure a light coupé and a pair of decent horses, and eleven o'clock found me jogging gently Combours-wards, with Jim Barrett, the slim, smooth-faced young sailor, by my side on the box, and nothing inside the carriage but a tightly-strapped plaid.

Jim was dressed in his best Sunday pilot-cloth jacket and a yachting stocking-cap on his brown head. He considered the stocking-cap quite out of place with the pilot-cloth jacket, and had wanted to wear his reefer with the yacht's name on it, and could not understand why I had insisted on his changing it. I now proceeded to enlighten him; and from the way he chuckled and slapped his knee I gathered that he greatly enjoyed the matter we were engaged upon.

We had no difficulty in keeping the Combours road, and we arrived at a little wayside inn about a mile from that centre of the world shortly before one o'clock.

They had not much accommodation; but I had the horses taken out and rubbed down, and gave them the best feed the place afforded. Then, leaving word that we were going for a stroll, and would want to start again in about an hour, Jim picked up that precious plaid and we started for the village; and as we drew near the inn my heart beat high, for there our venture was to be put to the test.

Dayrell had undertaken to keep M. Lecompte busy in any room they were able to procure, so I walked in and asked the white-capped old landlady for a bedroom for the night.

She threw up her hands and doubted if it were possible.

'There are two gentlemen in my only room now; but I do not think they stop the night,' she said. 'Stay. I will ask them;' and she bustled away upstairs, and came down presently. 'That is all right,' she said; 'they do not stop,

so monsieur can have that room when they are done with it.'

'Good! I'll pay you for it at once. But, meanwhile, I want to wash my hands somewhere, and to leave this package. Haven't you another room I could use for a short time?'

'But certainly, monsieur,' said the old lady, beaming all over at the chink of the coins in her hand. 'Will monsieur give himself the trouble to come this way? He can use my own room till the other is at his disposal;' and she led me upstairs to a room alongside the one in which Dayrell and M. Lecompte were awaiting mademoiselle. I could hear their voices through the wall. Barrett carried up the strapped plaid, and madame fussed about and switched things under the bed.

'Monsieur will excuse,' she said with an ancient giggle. 'I did not expect company in my room. But there is water. I will get a clean towel.'

Then she left us alone; and as soon as her back was turned Barrett slipped quietly out of the house and took the road back to the place where we had left the carriage.

He had not been gone five minutes when a rustling down below, which presently came upstairs in the wake of the landlady, told me that mademoiselle and a bodyguard of sisters had arrived, and that the crucial moment was at hand. Their dresses swished against the door behind which I stood, and then I heard the scraping of chairs and the murmur of greetings in the next room.

I had opened the plaid and laid out its contents on the bed: a natty new pair of wide sailor trousers with a leather belt, gauged to the best of my powers, a pilot-cloth jacket, a blue silk necktie, and a stocking-cap—all just like Jim Barrett's; and now I stood waiting with my heart going like a ship's pump.

Presently I heard voices in the passage. I opened the door and Denise was in my arms, between laughing and crying, and all aquiver with suppressed excitement.

I kissed her once. I could not help it, and it only took a second of our precious time.

'Now, dearest,' I whispered hurriedly, 'dress in those sailor things as quickly as you can'—and she flamed red at the words—and bundle up in the plaid such of your own things as you wish to take. Anything you don't need fling under the bed; leave no visible signs of your transformation. I shall be waiting outside the door. Be as quick as you can.'

I joined Dayrell outside. Outwardly he was as cool as a fish, but his eyes were dancing and his face was alight with smiles.

'We win this hand, my boy,' he said; 'and she's worth winning. I congratulate you, my son.'

'How did you manage to get her away from her keepers?'

'I begged their permission for five minutes' private conversation with mademoiselle as her legal adviser. One of them, a sour-faced old hen with a moustache, was for coming with us, but I headed her off; and at the present moment they're admiring the legal document with its black-lettering and big seals. They look on it as second-cousin to an illuminated missal, I think. I shall go in presently to say that mademoiselle felt faint and the landlady is attending to her. Then I shall come out again to see how she is getting on, and shall do a sprint along the road after you. It's straight along that way, I suppose?'

'Straight as you can go,' I said.

The door opened, and the loveliest red face this world has ever seen peeped timidly out and drew back quickly at sight of Dayrell. He put his finger to his lip and went into the other room. Denise came out with the hastily-bundled plaid in her shaking hands.

'I could not fasten it,' she whispered, and her eyes for once would not look at me.

I hurriedly fastened the straps, and we went down the stairs. Some men drinking in a side-room looked at us as we passed, and we were in the road.

'Another sailor-man,' said an old crone at the corner. 'The place is full of sailor-men to-day.'

We walked rapidly, and my companion showed a desire to keep behind me. It was not till we got out of the village that I really dared to look at her. Then I took her hand and slipped it through my arm and we went on more rapidly still.

'Was all this necessary?' she whispered, with a mingling of remonstrance and laughter in her voice.

'It was, dearest. They may wire to St Malo to be on the lookout for the loveliest'—

She pinched my arm.

'Oh! somebody is coming after us!' she cried suddenly, as quick feet came along the road.

'It's all right. That's friend Dayrell. I couldn't have managed it alone. He's a capital fellow. There's the carriage just ahead. Now we're all right;' and, as Dayrell tumbled in, I whipped up the horses, and we started for St Malo and the new life.

'Famously done!' said Dayrell, as soon as he could speak. 'I'd give any money to see the face of that old lady with the moustache when she finds the bird flown. Here, Lamont, get down and let me drive.'

The change was to our liking, and was rapidly made. Dayrell handled the horses well, and we went along at a spanking pace; never in my life had I enjoyed a drive so much.

I drew the carriage-rug well up round us and held the throbbing little fingers tight in mine below it. The colour deepened in the lovely face every time I ventured to look at it; but her eyes for the most part avoided mine and sought the



travelling landscape outside. And, though I was loath to cause her any discomfort, it was almost impossible for me to keep my eyes off her. Lovely as she always was, there was now, by reason of the strangeness of her circumstances, an added piquancy which doubled all her charms. It was as much as I could do to keep from gathering her in my arms and smothering her with kisses; but the sight of a well-dressed man in a carriage on the public highway smothering a handsome sailor-boy with kisses might have been too much even for the phlegmatic natives of Ille-et-Vilaine. So I had to content my hungry soul with such small crumbs of comfort as could be derived from gently reciprocated squeezings of the little fingers under the rug and from occasional hasty glances at the blushing face by my side. A delightful drive; but it had to come to an end.

The gray cathedral spire and the battlemented walls rose in front, and we drew near to the straggling houses of St Servan. The *octroi* was passed without exciting any undue suspicions of concealed eggs or surreptitious pats of butter, and we were clattering through the stony streets. As we neared the harbour, and turned in the direction of the livery stables, Barrett leaped down to go in search of the boat, and I noticed the quick, eager glance he stole at my companion, and the alacrity with which he went off to find his fellows and give them the points of the story.

We descended quietly at the stables, paid the bill and collected the deposit, praised the horses, and said what a quaint old town Dol was, and then walked along the front till we spied sailor Jim standing on the lookout for us. The yacht's boat was lying there between two smacks, and all the men's eyes were round with enjoyment of the situation as the new hand stepped daintily aboard, displaying the nattiest of little shoes as she did so; and I am quite sure mademoiselle's first impression of that boat's crew was that they were the jolliest and merriest set of men she had ever set eyes on.

As soon as we had taken our seats, Jim shoved off and sat himself down in the well astern, and we went skimming down the inner harbour between the smacks and coasters, and past the rolling bridge, and round the end of the mole, and so at last to the *Clutha*; and glad indeed, and triumphant, was my heart when we lay against her shining side, and mademoiselle tripped up the ladder, and I felt that she was really and truly mine. The screws were churning foam astern before the boat ceased rocking at the davits, and we were off, heading straight for Southampton.

I led Denise downstairs at once to the cabin I had had prepared for her. Her eye fell on the picture as she passed through the saloon, and she stopped before it and stood looking at it.

'How very much has happened since then,' she

said, 'and how very different I feel! Everything is changed.'

'For the better, I hope,' I said; and I raised the soft white hand to my lips and kissed it.

'For the better in some respects,' she said, looking calmly into my eyes. 'Now I only want Gaston, and then I shall be perfectly happy.'

'And Gaston you shall have, and we will all be happy together. Here is your cabin, dearest, and here is the plaid and your belongings;' and I went up on deck to join Dayrell and Lyle.

The yacht was making good time, and St Malo was already dwindling astern to the appearance of a very large church with a very tiny spire. But in front the sky was dark, and seemed to grow darker every minute.

We were leaning over the rail watching the toy town behind when a great cheer broke out forward; and as we turned we saw that it was caused by the reappearance of mademoiselle. She was dressed in her own dress, but had flung the pilot-cloth jacket over her shoulders. The stocking-cap she carried in her hand, and the shining coils of her hair shimmered like dusky bronze in the level sunshine.

She had come up the companion, and was looking for me when the men caught sight of her and gave her a cheer that brought the colour to her face and a sparkle of diamond drops to her eyes. She was taken by surprise at first; but, as soon as she perceived that it was herself they were cheering, she waved the stocking-cap with a charming gesture of *camaraderie* by way of thanks, and the cheers broke out again and again. Then she caught sight of us astern, and came along to meet us.

'Why are they so pleased?' she asked naively.

'English sailors are great admirers of pluck and beauty,' I said, 'and they wanted to tell you how glad they all are that you got through all right. Now, Denise, let me formally introduce to you Mr George Dayrell, of Lincoln's Inn Fields. You have met before.'

'Under different circumstances,' said Dayrell, with his pleasant smile. 'Permit me to add my congratulations to those of our friends forward, mademoiselle. Our journey so far has been most auspicious. But I cannot help my thoughts wandering back at times to your gloomy-faced friend with the moustache. I wonder how she is faring?'

'Poor Sister Cécile!' said Denise demurely. 'I am afraid she will undergo penances of the severest; but it really was not her fault.'

'No; the fault was entirely yours,' I said, 'and you are beyond the reach of penances.'

'Entirely mine?' she said; 'and what about your share, messieurs?'

'Oh, we were only there to assist—and to admire the performance,' laughed Dayrell; and Denise blushed rosy red.

Here Lyle came down from the bridge, as we

were now outside the cordon of reefs and islets, was introduced to his fair passenger, and added his congratulations in good broad Scots and his tribute of admiration in eloquent silence.

After dinner Denise paced the deck with her arm pressing mine till the hours grew old. The stars winked encouragingly and the friendly darkness enfolded us, and there was nothing to disturb us but the pounding of the waves against the sides of the gallant little ship and the humming of the rising wind in the rigging up above; and so, with the hunger of a starving man, I endeavoured to make up for the lost opportunities in the matter of wooing which force of circumstances had defrauded me of. But we did not speak much. We were together, and that was enough.

'Content, Denise?' I whispered once.

She pressed my arm responsively.

'Very happy,' she said; 'but never content till Gaston is free and cleared of all reproach.'

'That comes next—after to-morrow,' I whispered, and I knew that the rosy colour was in her face again, although I could not see it in the darkness.

That long delightful stroll together on the deck of the *Clutha* as she swung through the night towards heaven will never be forgotten by either of us. It atoned in a measure for the missing past, and every turn of the screws brought us nearer to the wonderful future. And when at last we went down, and were parting for the night, my pent-up passion broke bounds and I covered her face with kisses, until she pressed her rosy palms on my lips and broke away and ran into her room.

## MYSTERIOUS MUSIC.

By GEORGE GALE THOMAS.

**I**N all ages men have been ready to idealise music that comes from an unseen source. Who has not loved in childhood's days to hold a shell to the ear and listen wonderingly to the echo of waves breaking on a rocky shore, whose restless sound has been stored up by some magic process? Useless for the scientist to tell us that we are only hearing from a resonant cavity 'the echo of the innumerable sounds which pervade even the stillest air.' We still cling to our tradition, and often in maturer years listen to the mysterious shell-music with much of the old childish feeling.

For mystery always lends a charm to music; and it was perhaps to minister to this feeling that the builders of many an ancient pile placed in the clerestory an Æolian harp whose strings, played upon by the stream of air passing through the window, gave forth wild, wandering melodies, now soft and now on the fitful breeze swelling out in clanging chords that seemed to many a superstitious soul like spirit-music.

Nor were there wanting some to turn this airy music to practical account. Tyndall tells us of a gentleman in Basel who put up in his garden a giant harp, which he called a 'weather harp,' to foretell coming changes by the pitch of its notes. Needless to say, it was quite unreliable, and the Clerk of the Weather was found unwilling to strum his themes upon it.

Perhaps the oldest instance of mysterious music recorded in secular history is that of the Vocal Memnon of Egypt, one of the great Colossi of the Plains. Built by King Amenhotep the Third in the grandest period of Egyptian architecture, these giant sitting figures of seventy feet high

have remained through the ages majestic monuments of the past glory of Egypt. To the eastern figure of the pair is ascribed the powers which have made Memnon famous. From far and near men came to hear the mysterious musical sound which this figure often uttered at sunrise, and which was thought to be the voice of a god.

The origin of the music has long been a matter of controversy. Some have thought it to have been produced by a cunning arrangement of the priests. De Quincey suggests that as soon as the sun's rays had accumulated sufficient heat to rarefy the air within certain cavities in the bust, sonorous currents were produced by causing chambers of cold and heavy air to press upon other collections of warm, rarefied air, which yielded readily to the pressure. Currents being thus established by artificial arrangements of tubes, a certain succession of notes could be concerted and sustained. On the other hand, the historian Rawlinson asserts that the musical powers of Memnon were most likely due to accidental circumstances, as we have no evidence of the sound being heard earlier than the time of Strabo (B.C. 25-10), when Egypt was in the possession of the Romans, and the priests had little influence; although, during the two hundred years of the continuance of the marvel, there were probably many occasions when the priests would have been most anxious for the sound to be heard when the figure was silent. The wife of a prefect went twice to hear it, without success; and the Empress Sabina, wife of the Emperor Hadrian, was on her first visit also disappointed, so that—to quote the ancient historian—'her venerable features were inflamed with anger.' Yet a visitor who was only an ordinary Roman soldier has left an inscription

on the base saying that he heard the sound no less than thirteen times.

The upper part of the statue was shattered by an earthquake in B.C. 27, and it is suggested that the other part of the figure was then affected in some way so that it first gained its musical qualities. It remained so for two centuries, until some improving individual repaired it by adding new blocks, and from that time the music ceased.

Various well-authenticated instances of sudden changes of temperature causing musical sounds to be given off by rocks and stone are quoted from the records of travellers. Humboldt, when travelling in South America on the banks of the Orinoco, wrote: 'The granite rock on which we lay is one of those where travellers have heard from time to time, towards sunrise, subterraneous sounds, resembling those of an organ. The missionaries call these stones *lozas de musica*. "It is witchcraft," said our young Indian pilot. . . . But the existence of a phenomenon that seems to depend on a certain state of the atmosphere cannot be denied. The shelves of rock are full of very narrow and deep crevices. They are heated during the day to about fifty degrees. I often found their temperature during the night at thirty-nine degrees. It may easily be conceived that the difference of temperature between the subterraneous and the external air would attain its maximum about sunrise.'

A similar phenomenon is recorded by some French travellers who, standing one morning in the Great Hall of Karnak at Thebes, were startled by hearing a loud musical sound like the breaking of a chord issue from the blocks at sunrise. Other curious instances have been observed among the sandstone rocks of El Nakous in Arabia Petræa and near Mount Maladetta in the Pyrenees; while near the Red Sea lie some veritable Singing Sands—a chain of sandhills which, by a natural system of grooves inosculating with each other, become musical under changing circumstances in the sun's position.

But perhaps the most interesting experience of musical sands is that recorded by Kinglake in his journey across the desert. He says: 'As I drooped my head under the sun's fire, and closed my eyes against the glare that surrounded me, I slowly fell asleep—for how many minutes or moments I cannot tell; but after a while I was gently awakened by a peal of church bells—my native bells—the innocent bells of Marlen, that never before sent their music beyond the Blagdon Hills! My first idea naturally was that I still remained fast under the power of a dream. I roused myself and drew aside the silk that covered my eyes and plunged my bare face into the light. Then, at least, I was well enough awakened; but still those old Marlen bells rang on, not ringing for joy, but properly, prosily, steadily, merrily ringing for church. After a while the sound died away slowly.'

Kinglake thought he had been the victim of an hallucination; but it is probable that he heard actual musical sounds, either issuing from the rocks beneath the sand, or caused by the friction of the particles of sand over which the travellers were walking, as in the case of a curious mountain which Darwin visited in Guiana. It is called by the natives El Bramador—or the Bellow—because of the sound given forth when the sand covering it is put in motion.

'Some kinds of sand,' as remarked by Professor James Geikie in *Chambers's Encyclopædia*, 'which consist of well-rounded and polished grains of tolerably uniform size, and which are clear or free from dust and small particles, exhibit remarkable sonorous qualities when struck or subjected to friction. The well-known "musical sand" of the island of Eigg (Inner Hebrides) is a good example, and was at one time believed to be almost unique; but, as Professor Bolton of Hartford, Connecticut, and Dr A. Julien of New York have shown, sonorous sands are widely distributed in Europe and America. The sounds emitted are often decidedly musical, and distinct notes can be produced, high or low, according to the nature of the friction and the quantity of sand operated upon. When one walks over a bed of strongly sonorous sand a tingling sensation is perceived even through the boots. After being subjected to friction for some little time, musical sand gradually loses its peculiar qualities, and the same result is produced when the sand is wetted. There is nothing in the appearance of musical sand to distinguish it from mute sand—sonorous and non-sonorous sand of precisely similar aspect lying side by side on the same beach. No satisfactory explanation of the phenomenon has been given.'

Farther south in the swamps of Brazil, Darwin came across other causes of strange music. In the Brazilian swamps are to be found tiny frogs, of the genus *Hyla*, that sing in chorus at night, each perched on the end of a long blade of grass. Their *répertoire* numbers about four notes, and the effect in a lonely swamp, and at night when the tiny forms are unseen, is very astonishing to any one who does not know the secret.

A strange experience of mysterious music in the Bay of Monos, near the Gulf of Paria, in Venezuela, is thus recorded by a traveller: 'Between the howls of the wind I became aware of a strange noise from seaward—a booming, or rather humming, most like that which a locomotive sometimes makes when blowing off steam. It was faint and distant, but deep and strong enough to set one guessing at its cause. . . . As we went to bathe we heard again, in perfect calm, the same mysterious booming sound, and were assured by those who ought to have known that it came from under the water, and was most probably made by none other than the famous musical or drum fish of which I had heard, and hardly believed, much in past years.' The narrator



suggests that this fish might have given rise to the fable of the Sirens, and recalls the fact that the old Spanish Conquistadores had a myth that music was to be heard in this very Gulf of Paria, when at certain seasons the Nymphs and Tritons assembled there, and with ravishing strains sang their watery loves. The story of the music has been usually treated as a sailor's fable, and the Sirens and Tritons supposed to be simply manatees, or sea-cows, coming in to browse on mangrove shoots and thistle-grass; but if the story of the music be true, the myth may have had a double root.

Meanwhile, in support of this, an extract is given from a letter of Monsieur de Thoron, communicated to the Académie des Sciences. He asserts that in the Bay of Pailon, in Esmeraldos, Ecuador, and also up more than one of the rivers, he heard a similar sound, attributed by the natives to a fish which they call the siren or *musico*. At first he says he thought it was produced by a fly—a hornet of extraordinary size; but afterwards, having advanced a little farther, he heard a multitude of different voices, which harmonised together, imitating a church organ to great perfection.

The author of a *History of Trinidad* gives an account of a similar experience off the same coast: 'Immediately under the vessel,' he says, 'I heard a deep and not unpleasant sound, similar to what one might imagine to proceed from a thousand Æolian harps; this ceased, and deep twanging notes succeeded; these gradually swelled into an uninterrupted stream of singular sounds like the booming of a number of Chinese gongs under the water; to these succeeded notes that had a faint resemblance to a wild chorus of a hundred human voices singing out of tune in deep bass.'

In the depths of the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky many of the rocks have a chord of their own, and when the right key is struck beautiful musical effects are produced. The guides understand the secret, and command the rocks to send forth sweet musical responses, and these are continued long by the echoes of the place.

Mr John Procter, formerly State Geologist of Kentucky, gives an account of the effect produced in this remarkable cave by striking the water of the Echo River: 'Instantly the subterranean thunders of this under-world are let loose. From all directions come rolling waves of sound multiplied a thousand-fold, receding and again returning with increasing volume, lingering for many seconds, and finally dying away in sweet far-away melodies. Then, when the last faint sounds have ceased, the guide agitates the water with his paddle, and asks us to listen. The receding waves reaching cavities in the sides of the over-

hanging arches break the stillness with sweet bell-like sounds. Some notes, striking the keynote of the rocks, multiply the musical melody. Some notes are soft and low, others are loud almost with an alarm-bell clangour. This music, such as cannot be heard elsewhere on earth, gradually dies away in receding echoes coming over the waters from far-away hidden chambers. The echo is not such as we hear above ground or in buildings, but a succession of receding waves of sound lasting for about thirty seconds, and adding an indescribable melody to all sounds, whether from shouting or from instrumental or vocal music.'

Such instances, well authenticated by travellers, could be continued indefinitely. Fertile as are Nature's wonders in this respect, they are rivalled by the ingenuity of man.

In Pisa there is a chapel surmounted by a narrow cupola of curious form. It is of such a shape that a note sung in the cupola is prolonged for a considerable time, so that if three or four notes are sung in cadence a most beautiful chord is heard like the rich sounds of an organ. To many an ignorant worshipper it might well seem to be the answering chorus of the choir invisible. It is one of the rare cases of multiple echo, perhaps the result of design, perhaps of accident.

A striking example of the magical effects capable of being produced by any one conversant with the laws of sound was shown by the late Professor Tyndall in one of his lectures. He placed on the floor of the room an ordinary guitar. No one was near, and yet some unseen hand drew sweet music from it, so that all could hear. The guitar was replaced by a harp, with the same result. A wooden tray was then substituted, and even from that issued mysterious harmonies. The marvellous effect was simply due to the sound-conducting quality of wood. In a room beneath, and separated by two floors, was a piano; and connecting the rooms was a tin tube containing a deal rod, the end of which emerged from the floor. The rod was clasped by rubber bands so as to close the tube, and the lower end of the rod then rested on the sound-board of the piano. As the guitar rested upon the upper end of the rod, the sounds were reproduced from the piano; and when the sound-board of the harp was placed on the rod it seemed as though the actual notes of the harp were heard, the notes of the piano being so like those of the harp. As the professor said, 'An uneducated person might well believe that witchcraft was used in the production of this music;' and it is certainly more than probable that if he had done the same thing publicly in an earlier age, he would either have been revered as possessing supernatural powers or have been burned as a sorcerer!

## THE MOORISH TREASURE.

## CHAPTER III.

**T**HE first thing Wooly did was to mark the place so that he might find it again on his return with a light. So he tied his handkerchief to the bush, and let the latter return to its original position over the mouth of the hole. This accomplished, he set off down the Rock towards the town that lay far below him. His plan was simple. As time was precious, and it would take a good deal of it if he went back for Davie or other aid, he decided that he would manage alone. He would buy a packet of candles at the first shop he came to, and get back as quickly as possible; and, thus provided with light, he felt sure that he could safely get down the hole and find out what had become of Jack. He had no misgivings on the score of his personal safety, for he had several times explored some of the many passages that led into the Rock from St Michael's Cave, the show-cave of Gibraltar, far at the other end; and in these venturesome expeditions he had many times been obliged to wriggle along on his stomach for yards at a time through places just big enough to pass his broad shoulders, and he had always come out of it in safety. This hole did not appear more difficult to negotiate than those others; light was the necessary thing, and that he would soon get.

His expedition took him longer than he had anticipated, however; and when at length he got back to his fluttering signal he found that already it was getting late. As he untied his handkerchief, he glanced at the glorious panorama before him; and the sight of the gleaming Straits, backed by the sombre mass of the African coast, reminded him of the pleasant fact that in a few hours he would be slipping through those shining waters, leaving behind him for many happy days the frowning batteries and hulk-dotted bay of old 'Gib.' A moment only he stood; then, lighting a candle, and placing the rest of the packet in his pocket, he went down on his hands and knees, and was soon working his way into the narrow crack that he found only just big enough to admit him. By the flickering light, Wooly could see that he was in a species of tunnel, the sides of which were formed by the two big rocks before mentioned. The roof, however, was composed of earth and stones, apparently held together and kept in place by the numerous roots of the shrubs that grew above. But soon the character of the hole changed, and he saw that the roof itself became of rock also, and that instead of his being in a crack he was getting into a passage cut in the rock, probably by the action of water in the past. He was not sorry for this; the roots pro-

truding from the earthy roof had greatly hindered his progress, scraping his back unmercifully, and emphasising with many a dig the fact that he had not an inch of room to spare.

He had nearly cleared this first part, however, and was rejoicing in the fact, when he found that one of his feet had caught in the very last root that had inconvenienced him in his wriggling progress. He was flat on his stomach now, having been obliged to assume that undignified position in order to get under the obstacles at all; and, with an impatient exclamation, he gave his leg a violent jerk in order to clear it. He succeeded at once, the root giving way easily. Immediately, however, a rumbling sound filled the air, together with a cloud of dust that nearly choked him, and for a moment he could not imagine what had happened. Then it dawned upon him that he had probably dislodged a few stones by his hasty action, and he worked himself a little backwards, in order to feel with his feet the extent of the fall. Merciful heavens! They encountered, not a little heap of earth and stones, but a solid and unyielding wall!

Like a blighting blast the horror struck Wooly, and his heart stood still. His retreat was cut off! He was trapped like a fox in a tight-stopped earth! He was doomed to die as surely as that glorious sun outside would set behind the mountains across the bay! That unlucky tug at the clinging root had brought down tons of stuff behind him, filling the crack up completely with a tightly-packed mass. Not a chink, not a crevice could his searching feet discover. For a while the horror of his awful fate crushed alike the power of thought or action; but soon his strong young mind began to slowly recover its power, and the instinct of escape—the dogged pluck of race—rose hot within him.

There was but one way now: onwards, until he could find an outlet; or perhaps the passage might widen sufficiently to allow him to turn his great six feet of bone and muscle. Yes, of course, if he could but turn, there was a chance of being able to scrape a way for himself through the mass of fallen earth. It might not be so hopeless after all, he thought. He could not possibly discover, by the touch of his feet alone, how thick his prison-wall might be; it might turn out less formidable than he thought. Only let him find a place wherein to turn, and he would attack the barrier with his hands, and burrow his way to freedom like a mole; ay, if he tore his nails out in the attempt.

Alas! this new-born hope was soon knocked on the head. After a few more yards of serpentine progression he saw by the feeble light of

his candle that a little farther still the passage narrowed down to a mere crack, too small for anything larger than a rat to squeeze through. But this was not all. Another and more terrible obstacle prevented his going farther, even had he wished to examine the end of the tunnel; for, right before him, occupying the entire width of the floor, there gaped a huge hole, black and forbidding as the mouth of a well. Then, indeed, as the luckless fellow saw these things, hope completely fled. Blank despair filled him, and an agony of sweat broke from all his pores. Who shall blame him? Not I, for one, for never was a man in tighter fix than he.

Meanwhile, what of Jack, the disobedient cause of his master's undoing? Not a sound or sign of him had the latter heard or seen; indeed the events of the last few minutes had completely driven the primary cause of his expedition out of his mind. Now, as he lay face to face with his fate, the thought flashed into his harassed brain, 'What of the dog?' He must still be in front, down the hole naturally, since he could not easily have crossed it, lying battered and shapeless a hundred feet below. A hundred feet! Why—oh, blessed thought!—perhaps not twenty. Jack might be safe and sound and still monkey-hunting down other shafts and tunnels. Once more hope, that wondrous friend that carries us over so many bad places, came rushing back to the crushed spirit; and with hope came its comrade, action. Wooly worked his way along till his head hung over the very edge of the chasm. Holding the guttering candle down as far as he could reach and yet keep his balance, he eagerly strove to pierce the black depth that held the secret of his life or death. He could see that the shaft went straight down, also that the sides were, unhappily, quite smooth. Water-worn and polished they appeared to be; not a knob or projection of any kind to help him in his descent could he discover. He might as well expect to get down a factory chimney as down the horrid hole before him. But suddenly as he gazed, and as his eyes grew more accustomed to the darkness, he fancied—nay, he could almost be certain—that he could make out a yet blacker shade, if that were possible, far down below. That might mean bottom, or—horrible thought!—water. True, his candle caused no reflection, as might be expected in the latter case; but he could soon decide the question. He wondered he had not thought of it before. A stone dropped down would tell him one way or the other in a moment. Alas! stones were conspicuous by their absence. The passage just there was as smooth as the sides of the hole. Hunt about as he would, his hand encountered nothing that would answer his purpose. What could he do? Send down a candle? No, under the circumstances candles were far too precious for that. He might have to eat them later on—ugh! the

thought made him sick. His watch, of course! the very thing. What good would his watch be except to remind him of the weary hours that would pass before— He wouldn't think of it.

Gently swinging at the end of its chain, and held well out from the sides of the shaft, hangs the watch, calmly ticking away unconscious of the momentous question it was about to ask, and of the hopes dependent on the answer it would send back from the depths below. Tick-tick, tick-tick. Wooly's straining ears seem already to hear the dreaded splash as he opens his fingers and speeds the fateful messenger. Thud! clatter! as the chain falls on to the watch; an infinitesimal space of time has elapsed during the fall, and Wooly is assured of two things: the bottom is not water, but of sand or earth; and, what is of more importance still, only a short distance below him. A long drop will land him there; and as Jack must have safely done it, why not he?

Luckily the farther edge of the hole had a kind of ledge, or rim rather, that seemed to Wooly to hold out a chance, could he but reach it, of giving him a good grip from which he could drop feet first, and not headlong, as he would have to do if he tried it from his present position. It was a risky undertaking, and did not improve by contemplation; so he hardened his heart, stuck his candle into a little crack beside him, and with much difficulty—and when he was within an ace of losing his balance and tumbling headforemost down the hole—he managed by a supreme effort to grip the other side. Then, drawing his rigid body across as far as he could, he doubled up his legs. His shins scraped the edge, then his insteps, then his toes; and then, with his knees coming a sounding whack against the other side of the well, he found himself hanging at arm's-length, aching all over, and, odd to say, wondering more how to avoid coming down on his watch and smashing it than of the possible damage to his own neck. But hard rock and tender flesh don't agree, and his hands cried out to his spirit, 'Let go;' so, with a last look upwards at his candle, that, flickering above him, seemed like the only friend he had left in the world, he loosed his hold and went down into the darkness beneath him. He hit the bottom hard, very hard indeed. His legs seemed as if they had been driven into his body, and for some little time he felt as he imagined a telescope will feel when suddenly and viciously shut up with a bang. But presently the pain eased off. He felt he had broken no bones, and was thankful accordingly; so he pulled himself together, lit a candle, and looked round him.

He saw his other candle shining some twenty feet above him. 'No wonder the bump was trying,' he muttered. He saw his watch and chain lying half-buried in soft black sand at his feet, and that he had tumbled out of a small tunnel



into a bigger one. But the difference in size was not the only one, pleasant as it was to be able to move freely. Another and more notable difference was that, whereas the little passage was a natural one, this one wherein he now was had evidently been made or enlarged by man! There was no possible doubt about it; its shape and symmetry told him that. But if other proof had been wanting, the pick-marks on its sides could be plainly seen; there they were in their hundreds.

At first Wooly thought that he must have found his way into one of the numerous galleries cut in the North Front of the Rock. But a moment's reflection told him that the idea must be dismissed as impossible. He must have been over a mile if not more from the North Front when he first got into the hole, and he knew he had not come very far from the latter yet, not a hundred yards probably. Besides, the galleries were bigger affairs than this, with embrasures and guns, and such-like warlike things; nothing like this place. No. He must have got into some old and forgotten passage cut in the rock ages and ages ago, though whither it went and whence it came were matters as yet to be discovered.

The first thing to be settled now was which way was the best for him to go? As he stood under the shaft down which he had so successfully tumbled, the passage led away into the darkness on both sides of him. Which to choose? That was the question. In appearance they were similar, about seven feet high, dry, and what was more important than either, fresh and airy, thus showing that they had communication with the outer world somewhere.

As Wooly stooped to pick up his watch, however, the point was decided for him. Plainly to be seen in the sand were the tracks of feet. Not human feet—alas! for the poor 'Sheep'—but the little round depressions that showed that Jack and the monkey had passed that way. They led straight down the right-hand passage; and their discovery settled the matter. Their way should be his, and if it came to nothing he could but retrace his steps and try the other.

With no lack of air, a good bottom to travel on, plenty of head-room and candles, and a man-made passage, the A.D.C.'s prospects brightened considerably; and, as he started afresh with a lighter heart, he actually caught himself speculating as to the probability of his catching the mail after all. He looked at his watch, and to his surprise and delight found it was going as gamely as ever. The trusty though humble old Waterbury had survived where the expensive Benson or Bennet would have succumbed.

For some way all went well. The tunnel remained as good going as ever, and no new obstacles appeared to stop or hinder the A.D.C.'s progress. Suddenly, however, it lost the level character that had hitherto marked it, and Wooly found that

he was going very much downhill. This was rather disquieting. It hardly seemed natural to go downwards if you wanted to get to the open air! Still he kept on eagerly, but was again rather startled at finding that presently the passage forked into two, both branches being exactly alike. He still had the prints in the sand for guidance, however, though where they would eventually land him was very puzzling. The foot-prints were a certain amount of comfort, as without them he would have halted in indecision every fifty yards or so; for—strange thing—he passed passage after passage, first right, then left, twisting and turning until he had not the faintest idea of the original direction. He might be still in the tunnel he started in, or in another; but, as they were all exactly alike, it was impossible to say.

One thing was imperative: his first and foremost consideration was to get over the ground as fast as he could bundle, for he might have to retrace his steps at any moment and explore the other passages till he found an outlet. He began to feel tired and thirsty too; it must be after mess-time, he thought, as he looked at his watch. 'Hallo!' he cried aloud; 'after nine! No wonder I feel a vacuum. No dinner, and, what is worse, no steamer for me to-night. Curse the dog!' he went on savagely. 'I'll wring his neck if ever I catch him again for leading me into this scrape, the disobedient brute.'

Hardly had the words left his lips when, as if in answer to them, he heard Jack's bark coming faintly along the tunnel. 'Here, Jack! Jack, here! Good boy, here, here, I say,' broke from him now in place of curses and savage threats; and to his delight the bark grew louder and louder, till at last the truant made his tardy appearance, and master and dog were fondling each other with the profoundest mutual joy and delight. What about neck-wringing now—eh? Not much idea of that, I take it. On the contrary, with much contentment, the two journey on together, down, down, always down, until at last, quite unexpectedly, the tunnel comes to an end.

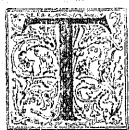
In what? In a great circular room, so high that the light from the candle barely reached its roof—a room cut out of the very womb of the rock, below the level of the sea perhaps—who shall say? An extraordinary room, its walls pierced with many arches, each exactly resembling its neighbour, each the mouth of a black tunnel. Even as Wooly stood in the middle, gazing round him in wonderment, he could not fix on the mouth of the tunnel from which he had just come. He examined each one, until his footprints caught his eye and settled the question. But what of the others? There he stood a prisoner, yet his prison bristled with open doors. He had nothing to guide him now, nothing to chose his path for him; Jack was with him, and the monkey's tracks were gone—they vanished under the wall. Pro-

bably the beast had climbed up into the roof; there was just enough hold for a monkey. Anyhow, he was gone, and the A.D.C. felt more lost than ever. These passages were terrible. Where had he got to, and for what purpose could this room have been cut long, long ago?

However, he must not linger; to stay in this place was, of course, out of the question. He must go on, trying each passage, searching, wandering

up and down until his limbs refused to carry him. It was his only chance. Eagerly he explored passage after passage, each one in turn as far as he dared; but all to no purpose. They twisted and turned and joined and parted in seeming endless confusion; until, at last, done up completely, and sick at heart, he threw himself down on the soft sandy floor of the round room, and gave up the job in despair.

## THE LIME-JUICE CURE.



HE virtues of lime-juice as a curative agent are not so well known in this country as they should be. By the use of this valuable remedy, scurvy, that formidable disease which formerly wrought terrible havoc among our seafaring population, has been almost entirely abolished. In the last century, scurvy was perhaps a greater scourge than the yellow-fever is to-day; like yellow-fever, also, its ravages were principally felt among soldiers and sailors on foreign service. Although scurvy is generally considered to be peculiarly a sailor's disease, it is perhaps now more prevalent on shore than at sea, where the use of lime-juice has caused it virtually to disappear. It still occurs frequently in mining settlements, for example, owing to the fact that the miners sometimes live for months at a time on salt or preserved provisions, and very often do not take the trouble to provide themselves with anti-scorbutic preparations. The lime, from which the juice is extracted, is a kind of small lemon; but the juice of the lime is in a much more concentrated form and more powerful as a remedial agent than that of the lemon.

The lime-tree is extensively cultivated for commercial purposes in the island of Montserrat, and elsewhere in the West Indies, and on a smaller scale in all tropical countries. It is a handsome tree, resembling its relative the orange, with bright-green leaves having strong aromatic properties; and it bears fruit all the year round. In the West Indies, it is the custom after meals to pass round small finger-basins in which the hands are washed, and a few lime-leaves crushed between the hands at the same time impart a delightful fragrance.

The best quality of juice comes from the island of Montserrat; although all the lime-juice dubbed 'West India' is not of premier quality, just as much of the tobacco labelled Havana comes from other fields than those of Vuelta Abajo. Fresh limes can now be procured in most of our large cities, where they may frequently be seen in the markets and in fruit dealers' windows.

Some years ago, when the writer was troubled with rheumatism, he saw in a German paper an account of the 'lime-juice cure,' which was recom-

mended for that distressing complaint, and determined to give it a trial. He was advised to commence by taking the juice of a dozen fresh limes or lemons daily, gradually increasing the number by two limes per day, until the good effects of the treatment were felt, when the number was to be decreased at the same rate, taking care, however, to continue the remedy for several days after the symptoms had entirely disappeared.

The remedy was tried, and the directions minutely followed, with the most happy results. In a few days the rheumatism had completely disappeared; nor did it ever make itself felt again. It should be stated, however, that this was the first time the writer had been troubled with this complaint, and that the attack was comparatively mild. Long-standing or severe cases would doubtless require a more prolonged course of treatment.

Doctors tell us that rheumatism is caused by an excess of uric acid in the blood, which has the effect of forming concretions at the joints, these producing the peculiar form of pain experienced by the rheumatic. As a blood-purifier, lime-juice is perhaps unequalled, and its action is both powerful and speedy. It probably acts by dissolving the concretions which are the cause of the pain. In gout, which is a similar complaint, we believe that lime-juice would give equally good results; though we have never seen it used as a remedy for gout.

The above is not the only instance in which the writer has used lime-juice with satisfactory results. A few years ago, when travelling abroad, he suffered from a very unpleasant complaint. Sores formed on both feet, and continued to increase until the whole of the upper surface of the foot was ulcerated and swollen, and ulcers commenced to form on other parts of the body. The pain was excruciating, and soon he was unable to walk or even stand up without suffering acute torture. The only position in which a little relief was obtained was sitting down and resting both legs on a chair. A doctor who was consulted prescribed various medicines, but seemed to have no clear idea of the cause of the trouble, and the medicines gave no relief. The symptoms, which increased in intensity, indicated, the writer now thought, a

form of blood-poisoning, which may have been caused by eating improper food, as he was then travelling in a part of the country where there was little choice in such matters, and the food was sometimes not above suspicion.

After having endured the pain for about a month, he determined to try the lime-juice cure again. No limes were to be obtained, so he had to be content with lemons. He took the juice of about twenty the first day, and at the end of twenty-four hours the change was most remarkable. The pain disappeared almost entirely, the swelling subsided, and everything indicated a rapid cure. The ulcers still remained, however, and required care. He continued the treatment, increasing the dose the first day or two, then gradually diminished it. After about a week, when he considered himself practically cured, he discontinued the treatment; but the symptoms at once returned, the pain recommenced, and the ulcers increased. On resuming the use of the lemons, the symptoms again abated, and he continued the use of the juice until the ulcers had completely healed.

The juice of twenty or more limes may seem a large quantity; but he found it absolutely necessary to take that amount. The system must become saturated, as it were, with the juice; taken in small doses it produced no effect. It will be well to commence with about half-a-pint of juice a day, increasing it gradually until in eight or ten days the amount reaches a pint; though, if immediate relief is felt, it may not be necessary to increase it to this extent. A third of this amount should be taken three times a day, and the use of the juice should not be discontinued until several days after the symptoms have entirely disappeared. If the doses are decreased too rapidly, a relapse may take place, which should be the signal for an immediate and substantial increase in the quantity.

There are many other diseases, besides those already specified, in which lime-juice might be tried with advantage. It is a remedy which is quite harmless and pleasant to take. The writer always took the pure juice, diluted only with a little water. With sugar it is more palatable, but is probably not equally efficacious.

The juice of fresh limes should be used when possible; failing this, lemons may be used as a substitute; but lemon-juice is not so powerful, and it is also apt to vary greatly in quality, according to the variety of fruit used. As a rule the thick-skinned lemons contain very little juice, and that of poor quality. The preserved lime-juice is also less effectual than that obtained from fresh fruit. If preserved lime-juice is used it should be of equal quality to that employed in the navy. It is the custom now to serve out lime-juice on all vessels passing through the tropics.

The strong antiseptic qualities of the lime are exemplified in the fact that unless the fruit is cut or bruised it does not generally decay like other

fruit, but gradually dries and shrivels up as it loses its moisture, without putrefying; owing to this fact, it may be kept for a very long time—although the juice thereby loses much of its strength and good quality.

[This article, by a resident in South America, is given as a record of personal experience, and not necessarily for imitation, as the quantities prescribed might not suit every constitution or all climates.]

#### THE COMING OF THE DARK.

FULL-FLUSHED, the sun dropt down  
Behind the hill;  
O'er hamlet and o'er town  
Blue haze rests still;  
Trembling, from dappled sky,  
The ling'ring light,  
With ambered tints anigh,  
Sinks from our sight.

With gray wings stately spread,  
The twilight goes  
Hov'ring from mystic bed  
Beneath the rose  
That in the gardens old  
Blushes bloom-deep,  
When day, its sweet tale told,  
Fast falls to sleep.

Then, sable-plumed and girt  
O'er mead and park,  
With low'ring eye alert,  
Stalks forth the dark;  
Striding majestic on,  
Whilst clear afar  
His sentry-signal shone—  
The evening star.

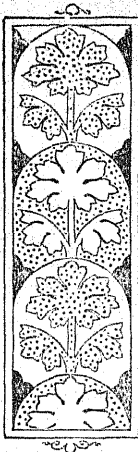
The deeper heavens then  
Flash softened light  
O'er forest, flood and fen,  
From star-eyes bright;  
The floating moon upsails,  
And o'er Night's face  
Her pale gleam gently trails,  
Like silvern lace.

The cooing of the birds  
Is stilled at last;  
The lowing, mild-eyed herds  
Have all gone past;  
Peace reigns throughout the land,  
And Nature then  
Proceeds with lavish hand  
O'er field and glen:

Whilst, from her dewy lips,  
The cooling mist,  
Like evening incense, dips,  
Till earth is kissed.  
Thus, too, amidst the flowers  
The Hand Unseen,  
In midnight's gloom-built hours,  
At work has been.

ROBERT W. BUTTERS.





# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### A NOVELTY IN ELEMENTARY TEACHING.

By SARAH WILSON.

**F**OR some time a conviction has been gradually gaining ground that a knowledge of the means to maintain bodily health must be added to the subjects taught in elementary schools as part of the necessary equipment for the battle of life. This conviction has already borne fruit in a few places, though at present the Education Department still holds the subject as optional. With a view to its ultimate general adoption, however, in the near future, the Sanitary Institute has instituted examinations in hygiene for teachers, rightly deeming that teachers must be qualified before they can impart information.

When children are taught in all schools the importance of fresh air, pure water, proper clothing, and personal cleanliness, and the advantages of work, rest, and play to both body and brain, it is scarcely too much to assume that dirt and disease will be considerably scarcer than they are now. A scheme of instruction already formulated and in limited operation includes such items as how to make homes healthy and happy; how to conduct cleansing operations properly in them; how to ventilate them; and how to take care of babies. We may reasonably expect a diminution of sickness and sorrow in the face of hygiene taught in this manner throughout the whole educational system. Those who have worked strenuously to this end insist that it is to such education that we must look to bring home to the people that it rests mainly with themselves to work out their own salvation from some of the attendant ills of poverty—ignorance, apathy, and prejudice. Instead of coming upon the subject in later years with all its avenues unknown and all its possibilities undreamt-of, children so instructed will be endowed with a fair knowledge of what is requisite for the maintenance of health, and also some capacity for the conduct of its preservation. The pivot, indeed, upon which turns the desirability of the develop-

ment of instruction in sanitary matters in elemental schools is the attainment of that ideal education which Sir John Simon outlined, and which he considered would lead the poorer classes of society to estimate cleanliness, decency, and propriety at their true value, and to apply their instincts of self-preservation to the prevention of disease. Charles Kingsley was among the pioneers who said that sanitary teaching would be a necessary element in the school course by the side of reading, writing, and arithmetic.

A difficulty in the path is the fear of adding to the existing burden of teachers, to say nothing of fresh mystification arising from an addition to the multiplicity of matters to be tackled by the scholars. This is met by the opinion of sanitarians that lessons of half-an-hour's duration once or twice a week would have a recreative character. The Leicester School Board for the last eight years has put some thousands of girls through a course of domestic economy in the time previously given to parsing and analysis, without further disturbance of arrangements. Another stumbling-block is the fear of overstraining the capacities of pupils; but this, again, is removed in the certainty that the practical nature of the particular kind of instruction places it in the category of a recreation.

It is important that boys should be included in the teaching relating to hygiene. This is mentioned because, as a rule, they are excluded from those classes in which departments in domestic economy are now taught. It is they, when they come to man's estate, who govern the little household in the cottage, or apartment, or tenement, and if they should set their faces against the decencies and proprieties there would be very little chance for their wives to maintain cleanliness, order, and thrift in their homes.

In working out a scheme for elementary hygienic instruction, Miss Ravenhill, who is its staunch advocate, would treat the home as the axis around which life revolves. Light, air, space,

surroundings, cleanliness, and aspect should be considered in reference to it; and the danger of dirt, the importance and values of foods, the care of the person, with preservation of personal health as well as of that of the community, entered into. Each successive standard or class would admit of a development of the subject till everything is included that goes to make a home happy and healthy. How to keep sinks clean, what to put into dust-bins and what to keep out of them, the dangers arising from ill-constructed drains, bad

ventilation, overcrowding, expectoration on floors, &c., the risks incurred by eating unwholesome food, would be thoroughly explained till the understanding was reached, and the instruction crowned by a description of the machinery for securing the public health by means of local governing bodies. When this novelty in elementary teaching is adopted all over the land, we may hope, in the course of years, for a considerable difference in the returns of the Registrar-General.

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

### CHAPTER XIX.—AN UNEXPECTED DIVERSION.



WHEN I went below with Denise the Corbière light was winking out its congratulations and good wishes to us, and before I reached the deck again the schooner was beginning to feel the want of the protecting Jersey coast. As I mounted the companion, Lyle was coming down.

'Oilskins,' he said. 'We're going to have a tough time.'

'Why, I saw no signs of it,' I said.

At which he smiled, as much as to say, 'You were much more pleasantly occupied.'

What he did say was, 'It's gone as black as a hat, and the wind rising every minute. We're only beginning to feel it now we're past Jersey. I'm going outside Guernsey; it's safer,' and he went on to get into his foul-weather gear.

It was amazing the change a few minutes had made. The stars were hidden, the wind was blowing in strong gusts from the north-east, and the schooner's bow was chopping heavily into the great cross-seas, flinging them back in cascades of spray, which the wind caught up before they fell and hurled squattering along the deck.

I did not like the look of things, and blamed myself for not having noticed the signs; but, as Lyle's quiet smile intimated, I had been much too busily occupied.

I waited at the head of the companion till he came up again.

'Couldn't we get into Guernsey?' I shouted into his ear. 'I don't want to expose mademoiselle to any more of this than is necessary.'

'Too risky,' he shouted back; 'wouldn't care to try. Safer in the open. She'll stand anything we're likely to get.'

But he referred to his ship, while I was thinking only of mademoiselle.

'I want that companion bolted,' shouted Lyle. 'Are you up or down?'

'Up, in a second,' I shouted and ran down: first to my own cabin for my thickest coat and cap, then across to the door of Denise's room. I tapped, and in a moment she opened it, and

her white face glimmered in the jerking light of the saloon lamp.

'It's coming on to blow, dearest,' I said; 'and we shall get a shaking. You won't be frightened? The ship is as safe as a rock—but not quite as steady, I'm sorry to say,' I added as a great sea caught her on the forward quarter and made her reel and shudder.

'I will not be frightened, Hugh,' she said.

I bent forward and kissed the white fingers which gripped the side of the doorway.

'Lie down, dearest,' I said. 'You will feel it less that way. I am going on deck to see if I can help.'

'There is no danger?' she asked.

'No danger, but we may have to run for it. The sea has risen so rapidly and it's blowing half a gale. Now, good-night again, dear one,' and I leaned forward and kissed the swaying white face, and she closed the door, and I put out the lamps in the saloon and climbed up on deck.

I bolted the companion door, and hung swaying on to the coaming of the hatch till the chance should come for a rush to the little wheel-house amidships; when the chance came I made a dash for it.

There was another burly oilskin inside with Lyle, and it was a pretty tight fit for the three of us and the wheel.

The motion of the ship was becoming intolerable; and the thought of our passenger below decided me.

'You'd better turn and run for it, Lyle. We can't make head against this. It'll only strain her and maybe something'll give, and then there'll be the devil to pay.'

'Right,' he said. 'I only wanted you to suggest it,' and the little wheel spun round. The schooner's head payed off, she rolled heavily for a moment, and then the violent pitching ceased as she flew before the gale and kept ahead of the white-capped racers.

'That's better,' I said. 'I daren't think what mademoiselle feels about all this.'

'Was she frightened?'

'No; but she's not a sailor-man, you know, and she's bound to suffer.—Dayrell, you long-legged longshoreman, why aren't you sick? You ought to be.'

'Never been sick in my life,' he said. 'This is immense. I think I shall chuck Lincoln's Inn and take to the sea—"the glorious, the ever-free!" —"Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ocean—Ro-o-o-ll!"' he shouted, sitting down suddenly on the locker as the yacht gave a drunken side-lurch that made us all glad of something solid to grip on to.

'I suppose she'll stand it all right?' I asked Lyle.

'She's all right,' he said; 'but we've struck it strong. There's evidently been a big gale up in the North Sea, and it's coming along this way. We shan't see Southampton to-morrow, I'm thinking.'

'We probably wouldn't see it at all if we tried to make it through this,' I said.

'That's so. In a case of this kind take the line of least resistance, as you man on the *Pall Mall* would say.'

There was for me, as evidently also for Dayrell, a keen enjoyment in the roar and rush and the sense of battle, and for me too it was a renewal of many happy memories. But my anxious thoughts were never far from the fair girl down below, and I reproached myself much that I had not foreseen the possibility of such a thing as this, and brought along a stewardess for her comfort and assistance. It had seemed so unnecessary for an eighteen hours' run across the Channel that I had not given the matter a second thought, and I feared much that Denise must be suffering exceedingly from my lack of foresight.

When the murky dawn came at last, bringing the tumult of the waters more closely home to us, I slipped down to my cabin and got into dry things, and then, with my heart all a-flutter, I tapped once more on the door of Denise's room. It was only when I had knocked three times that I heard her plaintive '*Entrez*,' so loud was the rush of the waves alongside and the roar of the gale up above. I turned the handle and stepped reverently into this holy of holies.

She was lying on the bed like a storm-beaten lily, and I dropped on my knees beside it and put my arm over her neck, and drew the pale sweet face towards me, for my heart was very full.

'Denise, my beloved,' I said, 'I am so very sorry to have brought you into all this.'

'You could not know,' she said. 'It has been very terrible. I thought sometimes we were sinking.'

'Oh, there is no fear of that,' I said heartily. 'Dayrell is absolutely revelling in it up on deck, but you feel it more cooped up in here. Were you very sick?'

'No, I was hardly sick at all; but I felt as if I would like to die.'

'We won't talk of dying. It can't last long, and you'll be all right soon.'

'When shall we get there?'

'We can't quite tell. The gale is too strong for us yet; but it will blow itself out soon. Now I will get you something to eat and drink.'

She raised a white protesting hand, but I went out into the saloon, and first of all I collected all the cushions I could lay hands on, and with them I banked her up and hedged her round so that she needed no longer to be all the time clinging to or fending off the side of the bunk as the ship rolled from side to side.

'That is better,' she said. 'Now I shan't be afraid of falling out. I was afraid if I went to sleep I might be thrown out head first.'

Then I opened a bottle of champagne and poured out half a tumblerful, and got some dry hard biscuits, and prevailed on her to take a few sips and nibbles.

'I will get you some hot coffee soon,' I said; 'but the champagne is a good tonic.'

'I think I shall go to sleep,' she said, settling down like a tired child among her cushions and pillows, and closing her eyes.

I stood for a moment looking down at her, the sweet centre and kernel of all our endeavour, round whom Lyle, and Dayrell, and I, and the ship and all her crew and equipment, were but as an outer husk of protection, and not to be weighed against a single hair of her head. Then I went out, proud and grateful at a trust so complete, and very humble at thought of my own unworthiness of it all.

As soon as the steward turned out I got him to make some coffee and dry toast; but when I took them in to her she was still sleeping as peacefully as a child, and I would not disturb her.

I went up on deck and found Dayrell and Lyle still in the wheel-house, smoking comfortably and swapping experiences.

'You here yet, Dayrell?' I said. 'You'll be getting knocked up, and then Lincoln's Inn will blame me. Hadn't you better turn in?'

'Oh, hang Lincoln's Inn!' he said. 'I tell you I'm going to turn sailor. Don't know when I enjoyed a night so much as last night. It was a little bit of the real thing.'

'Well, there's no accounting for tastes,' I said. 'Lincoln's Inn would suit most people better in weather like this.'

'How is the young lady standing it?' asked Lyle.

'She's asleep, now that I have assured her the ship's not going to sink. What are our prospects, Captain?'

'We can only go on as we are going till the gale breaks. I'll get up a rag of foresail after breakfast and save the coal; we'll need it all for the run home.'



We were running due south-west, straight out into the Atlantic. It was the only thing we could do; but it complicated matters all round. Here was Friday, and we had to get back to Southampton to get married and to buy Denise the things she needed, and to be at the mouth of the Vilaine to meet Vaurel and his prisoner by Sunday morning. Meanwhile we were running out into the Atlantic at sixteen knots an hour.

Denise slept till near mid-day, and then when I went down to see how she was getting on, to my surprise and very great joy, her door opened and she came out into the saloon, handing herself along by the walls till she was able to clutch my arm.

'This is splendid,' I said, 'to see you up again.'

'It's not quite so rough, I think,' she said.

'We've got up a bit of a sail to save the coals, and that eases the rolling. Now you shall have a cup of coffee, and then perhaps you'll venture to the head of the companion to get a breath of fresh air.'

The sight of the rolling gray mountains, however, made her head swim, until she grew accustomed to them. Then the salt gale blew the sickness out of her brain and the colour into her cheeks, and presently I had her into the wheel-house, where old Jack Barnes the boatswain was in charge and gave her a very hearty welcome.

'Bless you, no, miss, this ain't very rough. It do blow a bit, for sure, an' the waves is a bit awkward an' she do need clever handling. But, as I said down below last night, "There's no harm a-comin' to this ship while there's a hangel aboard of her, an' so you may sleep easy in your bunks, my lads—that is, as easy as the little ship'll let yer; an' I've no doubt when Mr Lamont 'ears as how some o' them seas got inside an' damped us all he'll tell old Squabbs to serve out double rations o' rum, and that'll make you warm inside if you're a bit dampish outside.'"

Denise laughed merrily at this oration, and it was a glad sound to my ears.

'Do let them have it, Hugh,' she said.

'Why, certainly.—Barnes, you've missed your vocation; you ought to be in the diplomatic service.'

'Thankee, Mr Lamont, sir. It's main kind o' you to say so; but I'm well enough content to be where I am, an' I was brought up truthful an' honest.'

Dayrell and Lyle did not turn out till dinner-time, and the gong brought our full muster to table. We were all delighted at mademoiselle's rapid recovery, and did our utmost to prevent the awkwardnesses of the situation obtruding themselves upon her.

That she fully sounded them I knew; but I knew also that her trust in me was perfect, and the knowledge made my heart beat high and

strong. She showed no slightest sign of embarrassment, and her manner was perfectly simple and natural. Her great concern was about Vaurel, and the impossibility of our keeping our appointment with him; and that was a matter we could not discuss before the others, as at present they knew nothing about it.

'Did you give the men their extra allowance?' asked Denise.

'In the Captain's absence I asked Squabbs to do so;' and I retailed them Barnes's invocation.

'He's a wily old chap, but a first-rate seaman,' said Lyle. 'I've known him for very many years. And I've no doubt they did get a bit damp last night; but I doubt if he made that speech until he set eyes on mademoiselle.'

'No signs of the gale breaking yet, Captain?' I asked.

'Not a sign of it. It looks as if it was going to carry us right across to the West Indies.'

'Ciel!' said Denise, looking at me and thinking of Vaurel.

'We'll hope it won't be quite as bad as that,' said Dayrell. 'They'll be advertising for me and offering a reward for an absconding solicitor. You couldn't put in anywhere where I could send off a wire just to keep their minds easy, could you, Captain?'

'I'm afraid not; but we'll turn and go back the moment things slacken up a bit. It doesn't sound like slackening yet—does it?' and we all ceased talking for a moment to listen to the wind howling over the skylight.

'I've a case on at the courts on Monday,' said Dayrell.

'You won't be there,' said Lyle.

'Lamont, my boy, I shall charge you fees on the higher scale for a seven days' continuous interview. In fact, I'm not at all sure that an indictment wouldn't stand against you for kidnapping, with felonious intent to retard, obstruct, and generally defeat the ends of justice.'

'All right, my boy. I shall send you in a little bill for board, lodging, and carriage. But your indictment would not lie. On the contrary, I shall probably receive the thanks of the Courts for assisting a settlement by keeping you out of the way.'

'It's an interesting case,' he said; and he described it to us very fully and clearly, and made an excellent story out of it, and held our attention till it was time for him and Lyle to go on deck.

'Whatever will Vaurel do?' asked Denise, as soon as we were alone.

'I can only hope that when he finds us not there he will understand that something has detained us, and he will probably hang about in the boat for a time and then make his way home again, and wait till he hears from us.'

'It is very awkward,' she said, thinking possibly of other things besides Vaurel.

'But we can't help it, dearest,' I said, thinking only of herself. 'Meanwhile it is a great pleasure to us all to find you so good a sailor. I was miserable all last night thinking of what you must be suffering.'

'Really I didn't suffer much, Hugh. I had a fear sometimes that we were going down; but I knew that in your hands I was as safe as it was possible to be, and I prayed to the good God to take care of us all.'

Her eyes, as she raised them to mine, were as frank and trustful as a child's, and in my turn I thanked God from the bottom of my heart for committing her to my care, and for the faith that she had in me. Our wooing had been of the shortest, but the elements had given us the chance of lengthening it out, and we made the most of the opportunity.

I bade her good-night at last; and when she had promised to pack herself into her bunk with the cushions as I had done in the morning, I kissed her blushing face till she broke from me again and swayed away into her room, and I went up on deck and joined Dayrell and Lyle over their pipes in the wheel-house.

I persuaded Lyle to turn in again for a couple of hours while I took the wheel, with Dayrell to keep me company, for, with the possibility of the gale holding out for another day or two, it behoved us to husband our strength as much as possible. So, with a couple of lookouts in the bow with forcible instructions to keep their eyes well skinned, I took up my old duties again, and we went swinging along through the roaring darkness. But never before—though many times half a thousand souls had slept beneath my feet, dependent for their safety on my watchfulness—had I felt the weight of my trust as now, and I could pay no heed to Dayrell's chatter, so that he found me but a dull companion, and I was right glad when my spell was up and Lyle put in an appearance again.

The gale worried us along all the next day, which was Saturday, and we were all getting very sick of it; but it was not till mid-day on Sunday

that the worst of it passed by and left us rolling in a very heavy sea.

The sun, which we had not seen since Thursday, broke wanly through the scud up above, and gave Lyle the chance of taking an observation. We worked it out together and pricked off our position on the chart, and found that in the three days we had run close upon a thousand miles. We started the engines, and turned at once and made a bee-line for England.

'Well, I call that travelling,' said Dayrell as exultantly as if it had all been due to his own personal exertions.

'Travelling the wrong way, unfortunately,' I said, and I fell to thinking of Vaurel. Here were we, seven hours past the appointed time, a good thousand miles from the appointed place; and, in spite of my confidence in him, I could not help feeling somewhat anxious. So much might happen—could hardly help happening, it seemed to me—and if any one of the things that persisted in crawling about my brain did happen, all our plans respecting Gaston would be knocked on the head, and all our chances of getting at the truth through Lepard would be gone. I tried not to worry, saying to myself that Vaurel would come out top somehow; but the more I tried not to, the more I worried, and I could see that Denise was greatly troubled about the matter also.

'This is Sunday, Hugh, and Prudent is waiting for us. Whatever will he do?' she said as she joined me for a walk on deck.

'I can only hope he'll go back home again, dearest, and wait there till we come. I can see heaps of difficulties in the way of his doing so. But I think he'll manage it somehow.'

'What is the very soonest we can get there?' she asked.

'It will take us three days good steaming to get back to Southampton; one day there, and a day and a half back—that brings us up to about Saturday morning.'

'I'm troubled to know what is happening there,' she said. 'It may be all right, but it may be all wrong. If only we knew.'

## FORESTRY FOR BEAUTY AND USE.



WHO does not love the society of green trees, either for refreshing shade, utility, or as clothing and beautifying hill and valley around? Tree-planting, for use and ornament, it has been tersely said, marks and measures the footsteps of our civilisation. According to William Shenstone the poet, who spent a fortune on the Leasowes, in Shropshire, 'The works of a person that builds begin immediately to decay, while those of his who plants begin directly to improve' 'Be aye

stickin' in a tree,' said the old Scottish laird to his son; 'it will be growin' while ye're sleepin'.' Sir Walter Scott was a laird of this kind—although, alas! he never reaped the fruit of his labours; and, as Alexander Smith says, he cared more for his plantations than for his novels and poems. Certainly the young lairds, and the old lairds too, such as John fourth Duke of Atholl, and others who did this, immensely increased the beauty and value of their estates, partly for themselves, but more for others. What should be a strong inducement to tree-planting

by proprietors of hill-land and moor-land, not in many cases worth more than ten shillings per acre, is that timber to the value of from twenty to twenty-two and a half million pounds is imported—Scotch fir, spruce, pitch-pine, and Weymouth pine, representing over fourteen million pounds of the total amount. There is a constant demand for larch for railway sleepers, telegraph poles, and scaffold poles, spruce for pit-props, oak for railway carriages and wagons, as well as for ash, beech, elm, and birch for other purposes.

The reports of the Parliamentary Committee on Forestry in 1886 and 1887 indicated that adequate instruction was not available in Great Britain. Instruction is given at the Government of India's Engineering College, Cooper's Hill, Surrey; but lads must go to the Continent for practical knowledge. For the past ten years there have been lectures on forestry at Edinburgh University.

The Edinburgh Forestry Exhibition of 1884 is memorable as being the first great display of its kind ever held, although forest products found a place in the London Exhibition of 1862 and in that of Paris of 1878. About half-a-million people visited the Edinburgh Exhibition, of which there is a permanent record in the book *Forestry and Forest Products* (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1885), containing a selection of the essays which were successful in competition for the prizes offered by the executive committee. These essays are on such subjects as the function and management of forest-tree nurseries; culture of trees by rivers and lochs, on moors and hills; economical pine-planting; teak; our timber supplies; the production of wood-pulp, &c. It would not be easy to overrate the value of this volume to those who desire to get an intelligent grasp of the subject. In 1871 the Highland and Agricultural Society of Scotland, whose excellent reports contain valuable papers on forestry subjects by the late Mr Hutchinson of Carlowrie and others, instituted a system of examinations in forestry, and grants certificates to candidates of merit. For the county of Perthshire alone we have a book by Thomas Hunter on the *Woods, Forests, and Estates of Perthshire*.

In a paper read by Dr John Nisbet (who has since published a book on Forestry) before the Surveyors' Institution, 15th January 1900, on 'Forest Management,' the writer—supported by others who followed in discussion—tells us we are menaced by a scarcity of timber, and prices must rise; the bulk of the timber for constructive purposes is coniferous; and in a few years the United States, our great competitor, will be dependent on Canada for its main supplies for wood-pulp. Germany is our greatest competitor in the demand for Baltic timber. The long, clean stems, with a good straight fibre, free from branch-knots, can only be grown in the close canopy of much denser woods than are to be found on

most British estates. It has been cause of complaint that the right kind of labour is hard to secure; and that, on the other hand, a landowner who was drawing a thousand pounds a year from his forests paid his forester fifteen shillings a week.

One would almost require to come home from some arid region of the earth's surface to realise the full glory and charm of the natural and artificial woods of our islands. Even an American traveller, such as Elihu Burritt, in his pleasant narrative of a *Walk from London to John o' Groat's*, accustomed to the luxuriance of woods in the States, waxes eloquent over the sylvan beauties of England and Scotland. He pronounces a blessing, as we have all done in our less heedless moments, on the man who plants trees, which grow up and assume the shapes of the living, lofty columns of the long cathedral aisles, and clothe the shivering mountain-sides of the Highlands and the plains and undulating fields of the lowlands. He is unselfish and generous towards a coming generation, giving them one of the richest earthly gifts. In a practical sense we inherit *time*, and in some cases a whole century as an extra. 'How cheap,' says the learned blacksmith, 'but priceless, is the gift of such trees to mankind! What a wealth, what a glory of them can even a poor labouring man give to a coming generation! They are the most generous crops ever strewn by human hands.' We are apt to overlook the forgotten benefactors who clothed these hillsides and plains at first with seedlings which have developed such lush luxuriance for a coming generation, and to conclude that they simply 'grewed.' The day is past, however, 'when Orpheus with his lute made trees,' or of Amphion with the

Tuneful tongue

Such happy intonation,

Wherever he sat down and sung

He left a small plantation.

Instead,

I must work through months of toil

And years of cultivation,

Upon my proper patch of soil

To grow my own plantation.

Perhaps Ruskin had some Alpine valley or the surroundings of Dunkeld in his mind, and the work of some of the tree-planting Dukes of Atholl, when he said that, although there are certain conditions of symmetrical luxuriance developed in park and avenue rarely rivalled among the mountains, yet a Lowlander cannot truly be said, in his richest parks and avenues, to have seen trees—which are best developed, like human beings, by obstacles—until he has seen them where they have difficulties to contend with. The author of *Modern Painters* almost endows the trees with human feelings, when he further says that we cannot either see 'their tenderness of brotherly love and harmony till they are forced to choose their



ways of various life where there is contracted room for them, *talking* to each other with their restrained branches.' To see all this and more, one need only wander along the pass of Killiecrankie, the entrance to Strath-Tummel (which R. L. Stevenson regarded as the 'wale of Scotland' and as superior to Deeside), or down the Tay beneath the shoulder of Craig-y-Barns and Birnam Hill, past Birnam Hall, for many years the summer home of Sir J. E. Millais. Every traveller will have his own vision of fresh and 'companionable' woods which flash back upon the inward eye long afterwards. We have walked for days through the natural forests of Sweden, and the gloom and glory of them come back now as of yesterday.

The method of tree-planting and forestry generally in this country has hitherto been much too hap-hazard, and there is a lack of system in planting, thinning, and disposing of the timber. In this connection we have pleasure in mentioning the publication of an extremely practical book, *The New Forestry; or, the Continental System adapted to British Woodlands and Game Preservation* (Sheffield: Pawson & Brailsford), by John Simpson, late head forester on the Wharfedale estates in Yorkshire, and author of a book on rabbit-warrens. Mr Simpson aims in his book to set forth the continental or natural method of forestry, to reorganise the general management of woods on private estates, to encourage greater economy in their management, and the production of heavier crops of timber than at present, and of better quality and better suited to the market. Foresters hitherto, he believes, have failed to do for their craft what gardeners have been able to do for theirs.

The *New Forestry* by John Simpson is an attempt to combine in a handy form all that is best in British forestry of the past with what is now acknowledged to be the superior and orderly procedure of continental forestry, especially in Germany, where the methods of Nature are followed, though not slavishly. To proprietors, factors, estate agents, and foresters, Mr Simpson's volume is crammed with practical information of great value, even though the reader may not agree with it in every detail. The author believes that few estate agents have a capable knowledge of forestry, although they are the only persons at present who might find it worth their while to study forestry on the higher scale, and combine it with their other duties as agents. Theory and practice are best taught together; therefore the only men now qualified to engage in scientific forestry are those who have had a gardener's education. Young men intending to qualify as foresters are recommended to serve a joint apprenticeship to gardening and forestry as a preparation for an appointment, unless they can afford to go to a forestry school. A 'school station' on some well-wooded estate might provide

what is wanted, if an agricultural college like Cirencester were to establish an out-station. As matters stand, Mr Simpson finds carelessness on the part of owners and indifference on the part of agents regarding the general management of forests in our country. What has crippled forestry in Britain has been, as we have already said, want of system and neglect of a working plan.

In the *New Forestry*, then, the system consists in dividing the woods into areas and compartments, in which the timber crops are regulated in strict rotation system according to the species, 'in the reproduction of crops by seed, or by plants raised in the forest nurseries from seed and planted out small; in planting thickly, so as to cover the ground speedily, in crowding the trees judiciously at all stages, so as to secure height, growth, and clean cylindrical trunks.' This system is as near as possible a return to nature. In the struggle for existence in a dense forest, trees are drawn up more quickly in height than if spread thinly over the ground. The lower branches die off at an early stage, leaving the trunk clean and free of knots. All this is found in forests of natural growth. This German system has been applied to the estates of the Countess of Seafield; and on the Raith estate belonging to Mr Munro Ferguson, M.P., in Fife, eight hundred acres have been arranged on this principle.

Guidance is given by Mr Simpson as to the kinds of wood most in demand. Scotch fir does as well in England as in Scotland, and is spreading, as witness the New Forest and the Beaulieu estate near Lyndhurst. The wood for the breakwaters to protect the head of the Solent is Scotch fir from the New Forest. Scotch fir, spruce, Weymouth pine, and larch are in constant demand. In Germany, where the climate differs little from our own, Scotch fir and spruce yield the earliest return in the shape of poles; there is a mature crop at the end of one hundred years, or twenty-five years earlier than with hardwoods such as beech, and fifty years earlier than the oak. Mr Simpson's second chapter can hardly prove pleasant reading for gamekeepers, although it is both suggestive and instructive. In concluding our references to Mr Simpson's book, we recommend the volume to all concerned.

Tree-planting in a scientific way is comparatively modern. John Evelyn (1620-1706) gave a great impetus to intelligent tree-planting by his *Sylva; or, a Discourse of Forest Trees*. Larch, first introduced by Menzies of Glenlyon to Scotland in 1738, was largely planted by the Duke of Atholl. Sir John Sinclair's excellent *Agricultural Report* of 1814 summarises all that had been done up till that period in Scotland.

Thomas Gray the poet, who visited the Highlands in 1765, found Lord Strathmore busy in and around the Castle of Glamis with various improve-

ments, and in his nurseries were thousands of oaks, beech, larches, horse-chestnuts, spruce-firs, as thick as they could stand, which had grown tall and vigorous before he had decided where to plant them. At Taymouth he remarked that trees grew to a great size and beauty: he noted four chestnuts of vast size and bulk on entering the park; a beech-tree he measured was sixteen feet seven inches in girth and about eighty feet high. Thomas Gray has also expressed the enjoyment he received from Burnham Beeches, within twenty-five miles of the west of London, and some of the scenes are embalmed in his *Elegy*. F. G. Heath points out that in Burnham Beeches, which once stretched from the Thames to the Severn, we have a wild forest, so near London, weird, savage, and strangely beautiful as a primeval forest. It was sentiment, Heath tells us, that saved the New Forest, the Forest of Epping, and the Forest of Dean. In the New Forest we have the perfection of sylvan magnificence, and in Epping Forest the picturesque remnants of sylvan grandeur.

We must not overlook the great tree-planters, such as the Dukes of Atholl, Duke of Bedford, and Earls of Yarborough, who planted twenty million trees during the last hundred years. Lord Armstrong, with the assistance of his excellent coadjutor Mr Bertram, has clothed the bare hills of Craggside, Rothbury, with luxuriant woods, the pathways through which and drives for miles amongst the hills are a revelation to the visitor. Between 1738 and 1826, but principally under John the fourth Duke of Atholl, we find that over fourteen million larch-trees had been planted in and around Dunkeld and Blair Castle. Visitors come from far and near to see the famous Douglas fir, deodar, and other avenues at Murthly, near Dunkeld—the finest and oldest collection of conifers in Britain—planted about 1845, of which, and the yew avenue, Mrs Oliphant makes weird use in her novel, *He that Will Not when He May*. The wonderful beech hedge at Meikleour is also worth a visit. It is about seventy or eighty feet high, and consists of beech-trees planted about eighteen inches apart and never topped. The proprietor of Meikleour once told a Frenchman, who was boasting of his beech hedge, that 'he had one at Meikleour that the partridges could not fly over, it was so high.' It has to be clipped by men on fire-escape ladders. It was planted at the time of the battle of Culloden, and the men had to be taken from their work to fight.

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humbly remonstrate against your orders. I cannot possibly do what you desire; it would at once destroy the young plantation, and moreover it would be seriously injurious to my reputation as a planter.' The Duke's reply was curt enough: 'Do as I desire you, and I will take care of your reputation.' The plantation was thinned as the Duke desired, and a board set up with this inscription: 'This plantation has been thinned by John Duke of Bedford, contrary to the advice and opinion of his gardener.' The Duke would have found a greater opponent of the old method of thinning in Mr Simpson, who combats the idea that a forest is going to ruin when it is crowded. The reverse is the case. By continuous planting during the past hundred years, the Earl of Yarborough from his Lincolnshire estate has received about five thousand pounds a year from five thousand acres.

The fame of the Dunkeld plantations drew sixty thousand visitors between 1815 and 1842 even in pre-railway and tourist days; and four thousand of these were foreigners. One of the latter, Elihu Burritt, says of John fourth Duke of Atholl that he left the greenest monument to his own memory that a man ever planted over a grave. 'He did something more than roofing the choir of a ruined cathedral: he roofed a hundred hills and valleys with a larch-and-fir-work that will make them as glorious and beautiful as Lebanon for ever. One of the most illustrious and eloquent of the Iroquois aristocracy was a chief called "Corn-planter." The Duke of Atholl should be named for evermore as the "Great Tree-planter of Christendom."' The Duke founded a new order of knighthood, he further remarks, far more honourable and useful than the Order of the Garter. 'To talk of garters! Why, he not only put the cold, ragged, shivering hills of Scotland into garters, but into stockings waist-high, and doublets and bonnets and shoes of beautifully green and thick plaid.' There is an admirable account of 'The Larch Plantations of Atholl and Dunkeld' in the *Journal of Agriculture* for 1832. It is there pointed out that Duke John abolished the stiff style of planting and introduced the broadcast system, and carried the idea of planting at higher levels further than was previously thought possible.

The growth of some of these larch-trees was phenomenal. In ten years some larches had grown to forty or fifty feet, while Scotch firs had only grown five or six feet. In 1800 the Duke sold a larch of fifty years old for twelve guineas, while a fir of the same age and in the same soil was worth fifteen shillings. Once, when the great tree-planter drove up to Loch Ordie, and home by the back of Craig-y-Barns, to see how his larch and spruce were doing, he noted this as 'a very fine, grand, picturesque drive, not to be equalled in Great Britain. The extent of the drive through woods of my own planting, from

one to forty years old, is fifteen miles.' In the last year of his life he planted six thousand five hundred acres of mountain ground with larch, which, when thinned out to four hundred trees per acre, he calculated might be worth six million five hundred thousand pounds. This, of course, is an over-estimate. The total number planted up to 1829 was over twenty-seven millions. The larch, it must be remembered, was then in demand for naval construction, and in 1810-11 six hundred trees were felled for Woolwich Dockyard, one of the logs containing eighty-three feet of wood. It was calculated that ten acres of larch, or three thousand loads of timber, would be required to build a 74-gun ship. The late John M'Gregor, forestry factor to the Duke for forty years, sold in that time fir to the value of about sixty thousand pounds to the Highland Railway Company. The land belonging to that company affords great scope for tree planting, were there better security against fires. Lord Mansfield, of Scone Palace, Perth, has also been a great planter. He planted Douglas firs, and felled the trees for timber when they contained sixty cubic feet of good wood. His forester, Macquodale, planted the trees and felled them. The wood of Douglas fir (not quite forty years of age) near Stanley Junction on the Highland Railway will compare with that at Murthly. The wood is dense, and the trees very tall, clean, and branchless, resembling the firs grown in German forests.

Since the larch has become subject to disease, Mr Hutchinson of Carlowrie has recommended the willow as a safe, quick, and remunerative tree to plant, especially the white or Huntingdon willow, the Goat-willow or saugh-tree, the Bedford willow, and the Redwood willow. The poplar is already a substitute for larch in many parts of Scotland, and he recommends the reintroduction of it in young plantations, mixed with spruce. Another valuable issue of the Highland Society is *Old and Remarkable Trees of Scotland* (1867); and D. F. Mackenzie's paper on 'The Identification of Timber,' with a series of photo-micrographs, shows how keenly and intelligently the subject is being studied.

There are surprises and losses which must be taken into account by the tree-planter. A great storm which occurred from the 16th to the 20th November 1893, blowing from the unexpected quarter of the north-east, did immense havoc in our Scottish woods. The trees were unable to stand the strain of a wind which attained a greater velocity than had been previously recorded in our islands; being ninety-six miles an hour on 16th November. The destruction in the Duke of Atholl's woods around Blair Castle, near Crieff, and elsewhere, was appalling; giant trees that had braved the storms of centuries were torn up or snapped asunder.

The present writer remembers four or five days spent in wandering in the shadow of some of the great natural forests which clothe the hills in and

around Hudiksvall Fiord, off the Gulf of Bothnia, Sweden. Here one is much impressed by the magnitude of the timber interest. The sawn wood exported is mainly of Scots pine or red fir and spruce or white fir. The modern steamer has now monopolised the trade of the Swedish and Norwegian sailing ships. Much of our timber is drawn from Russia, Canada, United States, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and Finland, and consists mainly of fir cut into deals, battens, or staves, or it may be shipped in the bark for pit-props. The wood-pulp industry has also increased the consumption; and it is curious to come upon mills in the woods grinding fir-logs for paper-pulp. The best land will possess a stand of about seven thousand feet of spruce-fir to the acre. Twenty-two acres of the best spruce-land will contain one hundred and fifty-four thousand feet of timber, which an average gang of loggers would cut down in about eight days. In a single day at a good modern mill this quantity of wood could be converted into paper-pulp, such as goes to make up newspaper stock, and the entire quantity would not be more than enough to meet the requirements for two issues of one of the large London dailies.

The trees selected are cut down in winter, cleared of branches and bark, and dragged to the banks of the nearest river, down which they are floated in spring and summer to the various saw-mills. At the saw-mills the logs are cut into deals, battens, boards, and staves. Here much depends on the workman's ability. The log must be judiciously cut so as to yield all the profit available. The deals are carried on tram-roads to the timber-yards, where they are sorted and piled for drying. A train by which we travelled from Näsvisken on Lake Dellen to Hudiksvall consisted of three very plainly-fitted passenger carriages and seven wagons loaded with wood.

It is an interesting sight to witness the loading of a vessel with wood, which is calculated by standards consisting of one hundred and sixty-five cubic feet, weighing from two and a half to three tons. A voyage in a timber-laden steamer, if bound to the continental port of Ghent, as ours was, has its disadvantages. The steamer is probably loaded down over the Plimsoll-mark, and timber is piled eight feet high, fore and aft, after the hold has been crammed. While rounding the coast of Denmark into the North Sea a stiff head-wind delayed us for two days and a night, and during that time the progress was probably less than a knot an hour. We tumbled from the crest of one green wave into the trough of the sea, then mounted another; the fore-castle was flooded; the lower decks were swimming; and a walk along the high wood-strewn deck was at the risk of being shot overboard. To the westward we could distinguish the funnels of two steamers which were struggling along, in the heavy sea, with yards raking the billows. 'This is Paradise for



ments, and in his nurseries were thousands of oaks, beech, larches, horse-chestnuts, spruce-firs, as thick as they could stand, which had grown tall and vigorous before he had decided where to plant them. At Taymouth he remarked that trees grew to a great size and beauty: he noted four chestnuts of vast size and bulk on entering the park; a beech-tree he measured was sixteen feet seven inches in girth and about eighty feet high. Thomas Gray has also expressed the enjoyment he received from Burnham Beeches, within twenty-five miles of the west of London, and some of the scenes are embalmed in his *Elegy*. F. G. Heath points out that in Burnham Beeches, which once stretched from the Thames to the Severn, we have a wild forest, so near London, weird, savage, and strangely beautiful as a primeval forest. It was sentiment, Heath tells us, that saved the New Forest, the Forest of Epping, and the Forest of Dean. In the New Forest we have the perfection of sylvan magnificence, and in Epping Forest the picturesque remnants of sylvan grandeur.

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The fame of the Dunkeld plantations drew sixty thousand visitors between 1815 and 1842 even in pre-railway and tourist days; and four thousand of these were foreigners. One of the latter, Elihu Burritt, says of John fourth Duke of Atholl that he left the greenest monument to his own memory that a man ever planted over a grave. 'He did something more than roofing the choir of a ruined cathedral: he roofed a hundred hills and valleys with a larch-and-fir-work that will make them as glorious and beautiful as Lebanon for ever. One of the most illustrious and eloquent of the Iroquois aristocracy was a chief called "Corn-planter." The Duke of Atholl should be named for evermore as the "Great Tree-planter of Christendom."' The Duke founded a new order of knighthood, he further remarks, far more honourable and useful than the Order of the Garter. 'To talk of garters! Why, he not only put the cold, ragged, shivering hills of Scotland into garters, but into stockings waist-high, and doublets and bonnets and shoes of beautifully green and thick plaid.' There is an admirable account of 'The Larch Plantations of Atholl and Dunkeld' in the *Journal of Agriculture* for 1832. It is there pointed out that Duke John abolished the stiff style of planting and introduced the broadcast system, and carried the idea of planting at higher levels further than was previously thought possible.

The growth of some of these larch-trees was phenomenal. In ten years some larches had grown to forty or fifty feet, while Scotch firs had only grown five or six feet. In 1800 the Duke sold a larch of fifty years old for twelve guineas, while a fir of the same age and in the same soil was worth fifteen shillings. Once, when the great tree-planter drove up to Loch Ordie, and home by the back of Craig-y-Barns, to see how his larch and spruce were doing, he noted this as 'a very fine, grand, picturesque drive, not to be equalled in Great Britain. The extent of the drive through woods of my own planting, from

one to forty years old, is fifteen miles.' In the last year of his life he planted six thousand five hundred acres of mountain ground with larch, which, when thinned out to four hundred trees per acre, he calculated might be worth six million five hundred thousand pounds. This, of course, is an over-estimate. The total number planted up to 1829 was over twenty-seven millions. The larch, it must be remembered, was then in demand for naval construction, and in 1810-11 six hundred trees were felled for Woolwich Dockyard, one of the logs containing eighty-three feet of wood. It was calculated that ten acres of larch, or three thousand loads of timber, would be required to build a 74-gun ship. The late John M'Gregor, forestry factor to the Duke for forty years, sold in that time fir to the value of about sixty thousand pounds to the Highland Railway Company. The land belonging to that company affords great scope for tree planting, were there better security against fires. Lord Mansfield, of Scone Palace, Perth, has also been a great planter. He planted Douglas firs, and felled the trees for timber when they contained sixty cubic feet of good wood. His forester, Macquodale, planted the trees and felled them. The wood of Douglas fir (not quite forty years of age) near Stanley Junction on the Highland Railway will compare with that at Murthly. The wood is dense, and the trees very tall, clean, and branchless, resembling the firs grown in German forests.

Since the larch has become subject to disease, Mr Hutchinson of Carlowie has recommended the willow as a safe, quick, and remunerative tree to plant, especially the white or Huntingdon willow, the Goat-willow or saugh-tree, the Bedford willow, and the Redwood willow. The poplar is already a substitute for larch in many parts of Scotland, and he recommends the reintroduction of it in young plantations, mixed with spruce. Another valuable issue of the Highland Society is *Old and Remarkable Trees of Scotland* (1867); and D. F. Mackenzie's paper on 'The Identification of Timber,' with a series of photo-micrographs, shows how keenly and intelligently the subject is being studied.

There are surprises and losses which must be taken into account by the tree-planter. A great storm which occurred from the 16th to the 20th November 1893, blowing from the unexpected quarter of the north-east, did immense havoc in our Scottish woods. The trees were unable to stand the strain of a wind which attained a greater velocity than had been previously recorded in our islands; being ninety-six miles an hour on 16th November. The destruction in the Duke of Atholl's woods around Blair Castle, near Crieff, and elsewhere, was appalling; giant trees that had braved the storms of centuries were torn up or snapped asunder.

The present writer remembers four or five days spent in wandering in the shadow of some of the great natural forests which clothe the hills in and

around Hudiksvall Fiord, off the Gulf of Bothnia, Sweden. Here one is much impressed by the magnitude of the timber interest. The sawn wood exported is mainly of Scots pine or red fir and spruce or white fir. The modern steamer has now monopolised the trade of the Swedish and Norwegian sailing ships. Much of our timber is drawn from Russia, Canada, United States, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and Finland, and consists mainly of fir cut into deals, battens, or staves, or it may be shipped in the bark for pit-props. The wood-pulp industry has also increased the consumption; and it is curious to come upon mills in the woods grinding fir-logs for paper-pulp. The best land will possess a stand of about seven thousand feet of spruce-fir to the acre. Twenty-two acres of the best spruce-land will contain one hundred and fifty-four thousand feet of timber, which an average gang of loggers would cut down in about eight days. In a single day at a good modern mill this quantity of wood could be converted into paper-pulp, such as goes to make up newspaper stock, and the entire quantity would not be more than enough to meet the requirements for two issues of one of the large London dailies.

The trees selected are cut down in winter, cleared of branches and bark, and dragged to the banks of the nearest river, down which they are floated in spring and summer to the various saw-mills. At the saw-mills the logs are cut into deals, battens, boards, and staves. Here much depends on the workman's ability. The log must be judiciously cut so as to yield all the profit available. The deals are carried on tram-roads to the timber-yards, where they are sorted and piled for drying. A train by which we travelled from Näsvisken on Lake Dellen to Hudiksvall consisted of three very plainly-fitted passenger carriages and seven wagons loaded with wood.

It is an interesting sight to witness the loading of a vessel with wood, which is calculated by standards consisting of one hundred and sixty-five cubic feet, weighing from two and a half to three tons. A voyage in a timber-laden steamer, if bound to the continental port of Ghent, as ours was, has its disadvantages. The steamer is probably loaded down over the Plimsoll-mark, and timber is piled eight feet high, fore and aft, after the hold has been crammed. While rounding the coast of Denmark into the North Sea a stiff head-wind delayed us for two days and a night, and during that time the progress was probably less than a knot an hour. We tumbled from the crest of one green wave into the trough of the sea, then mounted another; the fore-castle was flooded; the lower decks were swimming; and a walk along the high wood-strewn deck was at the risk of being shot overboard. To the westward we could distinguish the funnels of two steamers which were struggling along, in the heavy sea, with yards raking the billows. 'This is Paradise for

hell' we felt as we entered the Scheldt at last in bright sunshine, but with a heavy list to port.

We hear that Mr Lewis Miller, a contractor,

has removed his lumber interest from Sweden, and intends attacking the forests of Newfoundland with three saw-mills which will cut eighty million feet of timber annually.

## THE MOORISH TREASURE.

### CHAPTER IV.



As he lay resting, with his dog squatting beside him, and gazing up into his master's face with a puzzled look as if asking for some explanation of the strange game he had taken part in for such a long time, many bitter thoughts passed through Wooly's mind. He could not conceal from himself how utterly hopeless was his position. He felt certain, too, that one of the many tunnels would have an outlet somewhere in the face of the Rock, overhanging the sea by Europa Point perhaps; but how to hit upon the right one? That was the rub. This long fruitless search had plainly shown him that he might wander for days in the deadly maze that surrounded him on all sides; might be close to the longed-for outlet, and miss it by a few yards perhaps in the end; wander hopelessly until he became a drivelling idiot, and at last drop for the last time, never to rise again. The story of his strange disappearance would be only a nine days' wonder in the garrison, and then go down to posterity as one amongst the thousands of unexplained things that take place on this upside-down planet of ours from one year's end to another.

It was now long past midnight, and the demon of thirst had taken possession of his parched throat, and was beginning to make itself unpleasantly felt. As to his bones, they ached, as he himself expressed it, as if he had taken a journey in a third-class carriage on the ——— Railway. The sand, soft and dry as it was, made none too comfortable a bed for his aching limbs, and he proceeded to hollow out a little place for his hip-bone to rest in, in true campaigning fashion. The sand was not deep, and his hand came on the bedrock below. Stay! was it rock? What was it that met his touch, and made him spring into a kneeling posture, and scrape away with both hands like a dog after a rat? But it is not a rat, so you need not join in, Jackie, my boy. Something much tougher than a rat: a solid iron ring, to wit! Then, as the scraping progressed, it could be plainly seen firmly fixed into a great slab of stone that fitted flush into the solid rock. As the sand was cleared, Wooly saw that there was something or other carved on the stone; but it was so faint and filled with hardened sand as to be undecipherable. The A.D.C. did not try to make it out at any rate; he was too excited to bother about inscriptions and such-like things. What interested

him, and what he meant to do somehow, was to get up that stone; for underneath might lie the road to freedom. What else could it be?

Grasping the ring with both hands, he tugged long and lustily, at first without result. Then, after what seemed ages to his impatient soul, he felt the stone give an inch or two. Encouraged by this, he heaved with the strength of two men. His muscles cracked, his back felt as if breaking, when up came one end at last; then he made one supreme effort, swung round the stone clear of its bed, and saw beneath him exactly what he had expected—a square black hole. As nothing came out of it, much to Jack's disgust, Wooly proceeded to examine it.

Holding his candle down as far as he could stretch, he peered about and discerned another room; but quite a small and low one this time. The floor was just below him; so, without a moment's hesitation, he jumped down into it, candle and all. 'Hullo!' he cried aloud, 'what are those?' as he caught sight of some great iron-clamped chests ranged along one side of the chamber; and then the light flashed upon a pile of shining things that filled one corner, a great heap of silver and gold coin. Wooly was flabbergasted. What on earth had he stumbled across now? and then suddenly there flashed across his brain the Duffer colonel's story, and he knew that he had found the Moorish Treasure.

So, after all, the legend was no lie. It was the exception that proved the rule. The Moorish Treasure really did exist outside the gunners' brains, and he, Wooly the 'Sheep,' had found it as Bob Scarlet would say, 'all by his little lones.' True, it belonged to Government, that snaps up these good things whenever it can get wind of them, which is not always. But his, Wooly's, share would be enormous—heaps and heaps—and he would pay off all his debts, and marry the girl of his heart, and be happy ever after, like the good boys in the story-books.

'Pave the Alameda with silver! I should think they would indeed,' he cried to Jack, for want of a better audience; then, as he realised the magnitude of the heap, 'ay, and with gold too, and hardly miss it.' He spoke truly. Besides the heaps of coin, the great chests were filled with the spoils of churches and temples, of noble castles and humble huts—gold and silver cups, jewels of all kinds, crosses and candlesticks, bracelets and rings, belts and necklets, all gleam-



ing with precious stones; there were little bags of diamonds, the leather rotted with age, and their contents scattered about in confusion; wealth untold, the proceeds of years of successful piracy, of villages sacked and ships scuttled; all plainly telling of the bad old times, when men and women carried their wealth as well as their lives in their hands, and the corsairs swept out from their lair behind the Rock, and spread ruin and desolation and wrought endless horrors along the fair shores of the Mediterranean Sea. To what end had they thus toiled and spoiled? For whom had they so securely hidden their hoard? For the benefit of a hated Christian after all, and one of the race that had been the chief cause of their downfall and humiliation.

After Wooly had feasted his eyes on his find to his heart's content, he came back to the stern realities of the occasion, and made a careful examination of the walls of the treasure chamber, hoping to find some traces of a door or other outlet. But in this he was disappointed. Not a sign of anything of the kind could he discover; so, convinced that his means of escape did not lie there, he hoisted himself up through the manhole again into the big room, and sat down beside the stone slab to think it all out quietly and logically.

Recalling what he could of the story told at dinner, he remembered that the great point was the possession by the Moors of the Moorish Castle for a day or two. Clearly then, if this was the treasure—and to doubt it was to doubt his own eyes—the entrance to the tunnel that led to it was in or under that building. But how was he to fix on the right passage? Even if he did succeed in that by a fluke, it was pretty certain that the outlet must be blocked, fallen in, built up—a thousand things could have happened to hide it, after all the years since it had been used by the Moors. He knew that the gunners had dug and dived, inside and out, played old gooseberry in fact with the place in their efforts to find the treasure—his treasure! Why, they had even gone the length of draining the well in the castle-yard in the hope of finding it down in its watery depths. What chance had he then of getting out, even though he did find the right way? No, a thousand times no; it was impossible. He must try something better than that. It was really too cruel. Here he was, a sort of Rothschild family rolled into one, suffering from a dry throat and an empty stomach, and not a crust or a drink could all his wealth get for him. The secret had been well kept indeed, and was likely to remain so, he reflected bitterly. A few bones, and perhaps his watch, would be all that would be left to tell the next possessor of it that some luckless mortal before him had been for a brief space one of the richest men in the world.

As he came to this melancholy conclusion his

eyes wandered aimlessly over the stone slab beside him, on which he had stuck his candle; and, noticing the carving on it, which he had forgotten in the first excitement of discovery, he bethought himself of setting to work to make out what it was. But he had first to scrape it clear with his knife, so filled up was it. It was not an inscription or anything likely to help him, he found, being simply a couple of crossed swords—a mark to identify the stone, he imagined. Suddenly it dawned upon him, however, that he had seen that or something like it before; but where and when he could not recollect. Rack his brains as much as he liked, he could get nothing out of them on the subject, and in despair he gave it up, half convinced that he must have dreamed it.

'Well, Jack, old dog, we may as well try once more and get a nap,' Wooly said to his companion. 'I daresay you are as tired as your master—eh, poor little beggar? It must be getting very late, or rather early, I should think. Let's look at the time, doggie. Why! Well, I'm blessed, how idiotic of me not to remember! That's where it is all the time.'

That is just where it was, in the middle of the coin dangling on his watch-chain, the device of the two crossed swords. What did it mean? What new discovery was he about to make now? What was the connection between the coin and the stone and treasure? Perhaps he held in his hand the key to his salvation. He must read the riddle if he could, puzzle it out by hook or by crook; and presently, after long and anxious thought, he arrived at the following conclusions: Firstly, he took it that the design on the coin was the key to the approaches to the treasure. The centre circle would therefore represent the room in which he then was, the crossed swords the stone over the hoard similarly marked, the tortuous lines the maze of passages that had so confused him. Then the oblong arrangement with its little dots, right on the edge of the coin at the end of one of the lines? That was, obviously, the tower of the Moorish castle, the entrance to the right tunnel. He remembered that it was tall and square, and was pierced with sundry small slits of window; the dots would do for those capitally. But what about the bird, the eagle? It occupied an exactly similar place at the end of a line as did the castle, only on the opposite edge of the coin. Why not another entrance, or outlet if you will, at the other end of the Rock? The other end would be where the cliffs were highest and quite inaccessible, rising sheer from the sea, where the eagles built—of course, the eagles! that was it; the whole thing was clear enough now. He knew that from time immemorial several pairs had nested high up on those frowning crags. They were to be seen wheeling about over the summit of the Rock any day you cared to look for them. Once or

twice he remembered some adventurous soul had been lowered down with ropes in hope of getting at a nest, but without success. The practice had been forbidden now. Of course there was an opening somewhere in those cliffs, and that was what he must strive to reach—his only hope. As to the monkey on the reverse of the coin, Wooly concluded that it meant simply to indicate the rock where the monkeys had their home. Perhaps the Moors had put them there, knowing that they could not escape, as an ever-enduring index to the locality of their storehouse. Who knows! It was as likely as most of the suggestions that were put forward to account for their presence at Gibraltar.

If all this was correct, he had two chances to choose from—the castle and the cliff. The former had all the odds against it, as he had before decided. The inaccessible cliffs stood a good chance of being almost in the same state as when the passage was made. So, hey for the eagle and freedom!

First of all he must test his theory of the passages, and so he carefully counted the number of openings in the circular wall of his prison. There were twenty-one.

His hand shook so badly that he could hardly hold the coin steady while he counted the number of lines that cut the circumference of the little centre circle. He did it slowly and carefully twice over. There were twenty-one.

So far so good; but now another difficulty presented itself. How was he to tell which passage coincided with which line on the coin? There was absolutely no mark on either coin or rock to guide him. There was nothing for it, then, but to take for granted that the passage by which he had entered the room was the direct one from the castle, and then counting the number of lines that cut the circle between that and the eagle line (as he called it), mark off the same number of openings in the wall. This would give him the right passage, always supposing that he had really used the castle passage; but if he had not! Oh, he wouldn't think anything so horrible!

This operation was soon finished, and the selected opening duly marked by means of a cross scratched with his knife on the wall. Then

Wooly once more dropped into his treasure-chamber in order to make a little selection of stones to take with him on his expedition, for should he succeed, he might want something with which to convince the sceptics preparatory to organising a regular party on his return to accompany him. This agreeable task did not take long. He selected some diamonds and a ruby or two, not many—he did not want to burden himself even so lightly, for he did not know what perils he might yet have to go through—and, rolling them in his handkerchief, stowed them away in his pocket. Then, going up again, and lighting one of his few remaining candles, he started once more on his adventurous way, leaving behind him, but only for a day or two he hoped, the gloomy room and its wonderful secret. Jack followed, his mild, not to say depressed, demeanour plainly expressing the annoyance he felt at his master's dilatory proceedings and long stay in such dark and unpleasant places.

It was now that Wooly appreciated the old Moor's gift, for he had not gone very far when he came upon the inevitable forking in the tunnel. Thanks, however, to the well-defined plan he carried in his hand, he had now no difficulty in selecting the eagle path. The fork was plainly shown on it, and was an additional and comforting proof that the business was working out well, and that his theories were, so far, correct; and so he went on, the way still clear and the going good. Best of all, the coin was always correct. Every turn, every branch, as he came to it, he found duly recorded on his precious little golden map. On, on, and, good omen! always inclining upwards now; and soon Wooly began to lose all fear of not reaching his point safely, though what that point would turn out to be was not very certain. After all this weary struggle was he going to find the outlet blocked or in some recessed part of the cliffs where his cries and signals would be beyond the ken of the men in the signal-station on the summit, or of any chance fisherman's boat that might be cruising round the point? Time alone could tell; and, spurred by these maddening doubts, he redoubled his exertions, and pushed along at top speed.

## A NOVEL KITCHEN-BOILER SAFETY-VALVE.



OUT of sight out of mind' holds true of safety-valves as of other mundane contrivances; and many a disastrous boiler explosion is attributable to the fact that what is fondly believed to be a silent monitor over the safety of the kitchen-boiler is simply lying in a state of rusted-up inefficiency,

unseen and unheeded. So, in this respect, the ordinary type of kitchen-boiler safety-valve is only too often a source of absolute danger.

To overcome this tendency to rust-up, and to provide an appliance which shall serve the dual purpose of a safety-valve, always in sight and a visible indicator of the state of the water circulating from the boiler, great credit is due to

Mr Charles Mackintosh for the very ingenious and beautifully-arranged instrument he has just invented and patented, and which has been successfully adopted in many of the best modern houses. In outward appearance the instrument may be said to resemble the familiar Fitzroy or mercurial barometer, only that it has two vertical and parallel tubes containing mercury, instead of only one as in the barometer. It can be suspended in any suitable place, such as in the hall beside the barometer, or in the library, while one enthusiastic admirer of the instrument purposes fitting his in the dining-room.

And here it may be stated that the instrument is very easily installed, it being only necessary to provide the ordinary flow-pipe with a stop-cock, from which a pipe leads upwards to a T-piece on the top of the instrument. The water in this pipe should come to within five feet of the T-piece, the remainder of this length of pipe being filled with a column of oil and spirits of wine, the latter coming next to the mercury.

Although this arrangement is at present only patented and being put into practical use, the idea of using the mercurial column as a safety-valve and indicator always in view is not new. For fully twenty years this plan has been tried, and one or two well-known scientists have even

lodged specifications at the Patent Office in relation to such inventions, but these efforts do not appear to have been attended with any success; and in fact Mr Mackintosh himself gave up trying to solve the problem about three years ago, as being unreliable, owing to a small column of water always forming on top of the mercury being liable to freeze during a severe frost, and so stop the working of the instrument. This appeared an insurmountable factor in the problem, and baffled even hot-water engineers of the highest standing; thus Mr Mackintosh's present solution of the difficulty would do credit to the most advanced of our scientists. It is, of course, well known that oil floats on water; but it is not so generally known that, although alcohol is so mixable in water, its specific gravity is so much less that it will float freely on oil. This fact Mr Mackintosh has taken advantage of, with the result that his valve is a complete success under any variation of outside temperature, the mixed but unbroken column first of spirits of wine from the top of the mercury in one limb of the glass tube joining about a couple of feet down from the T-piece with a column of white mineral oil floating on the top of the water from the flow-pipe, and forming an uncongealable connection between the water and the mercury.

## DAVID AND JONATHAN OF THE HILLS.

By WILLIAM BUCHAN, Author of *Comedy on the Moors*, &c.



Y! they were a queer pair—a very queer pair! We ca'd them David an' Jonathan; no' that they were very friendly in public—far frae that; they never could 'gree thegither a meenute. I've seen them fechtin' like twae dougs about the sma'est thing, ca'in' ane anither a' the blackyird names ye could think o'. And syne, when they were feenished, they gaed awa' lookin' quite satisfied.

'Jock Scott was a Leebéral, so Wat Dempster had to ca' himsel' a Tory. Jock belonged to the Parish Kirk, so Wat had to join the Free; though neither o' them darkened the door o' the house of God very aften. They even gaed the length o' each using a different kind o' sheep-dip. Ay! they were a strange pair! But for a' they couldna 'gree, there never were twae truer friends, and if onybody else misca'ed the ane by a word in the ither's hearing—weel, he didna dae it again.

'They were herds away up among the hills. Jock herded the Crammil and Wat the Ruchill. They mairit sisters, and for fifteen years they lived about a mile apart. But did ye ever hear how they cam' to separate?'

I had not; and the shepherd of Laighlands told me the story.

The cause of all fell out one stormy night in early spring. The shepherd of the Crammil had come in from the hill. He had removed his wet boots and dripping plaid, and had stretched himself luxuriously in the great armchair beside a blazing fire. Outside, the wind howled and the snow drifted; but the mind of the shepherd was at ease, for he knew that his sheep were so safely folded in the lee of the hill that no harm would come nigh them during the night. The warmth of the fire crept through his limbs and comforted him. The whistling of the wind round the cottage sang him a lullaby; and as he drowsed pleasantly his soul was filled with much content.

Sleep had almost mastered him when he was aroused by the sudden opening of the door and by the entrance, like an apparition, of a small girl with frightened eyes. It was his niece, the daughter of the neighbouring shepherd of the Ruchill, with the news that her father had gone out that afternoon at two o'clock and had not yet returned.

The shepherd of Crammil started up, rubbing the sleep from his eyes with his fists.

'Eh!—what?' he cried.

The little girl repeated her story.

'Never! Twae o'clock, ye say? And it's eight



noo. Sax 'ours on the hill! Surely'— He caught sight of the frightened little face and checked himself. 'But there! dinna be feared. There can be naething wrang. He'll just ha'e gane up to Jock Shiel's at the Craig Slap. Rin and tell your mither no' to fash hersel', and I'll gang and bring him hame.'

Thus he soothed the girl with reassuring words. Then he turned to his wife.

'Quick!' he cried; 'my buits and my plaid. There's something far wrang, and there's nae time to be lost.'

He slipped on his boots, stuck a bonnet on his head, and vanished into the night, wrapping his plaid round him as he went.

'Sax 'ours!' he muttered to himself as he strode through the snow, 'and it's been dark for fower—and sic a nicht! Dod! if he should be'— He shuddered, and the bare thought lengthened his stride as he swung onward into the teeth of the storm.

It was a wild night. The cold was terrible, intense—not frosty, only that raw, biting cold that seeps through the clothes and skin into the very marrow. The snow was soft and wet, and a roaring, biting gale from the north-east swept it in clouds through the air till the eyes were blinded and the face ached. Underfoot the deep snow clogged the boots and made walking slow and difficult; and all landmarks had disappeared in a uniform, undulating white. To crown all, an inky, impenetrable darkness pressed like a pall over everything.

For a moment Jock Scott halted at the burnside to determine his course. But in such blackness of night there could be little choice; for all the tracks were nearly equally bad. The only feasible plan was to strike the Ruchill at its highest point and search the hill downwards. So he crossed the burn and struck up the lee-side of the Crammil. In the snow and darkness no mortal could pick his way, not even the shepherd who had herded on the hill for fifteen years, and knew every inch of the ground. The blackness of the pit closed around him. Several times even at the outset he almost lost his bearings. No earthly object was visible save the dim round of shadowy grayness at his feet. Shut up within his narrow circle of vision he stumbled upward through the snow, guided only by the bleating of the sheep in the folds below, and by the varying steepness of the hillside.

At first, lying as it did between him and the north, the Crammil sheltered him from the full force of the storm. Here, on the lee of the hill, the hurricane and the shriek of the wind were hushed. The weight of snow fell thickly and softly, filling every nook of his plaid, and melting, trickled down his body in ice-cold streams. To one so weather-worn as the shepherd that was a small matter. It was only when he had mounted the highest ridge and stood on the crest

of the hill that the storm struck him with all its fury.

Never in all his life had the shepherd experienced such a night. Even to this day the memory of it is fresh in the countryside, and many are the stories I have heard: how whole flocks were lost; how sheep were buried under snow-wreaths, and a few discovered only by their bleating; and how more than one shepherd had lost his life in the work of rescue.

The violence of the gale forced the shepherd of Crammil to his knees. It seemed to gather force and hurl itself against him to bar his advance. The blizzard of snow roared and hissed past his ears, filling his eyes and nose and mouth till in sheer want of breath he was glad to turn his back to the blast.

But, in spite of all, he struggled on. Up till now the faint hope had clung to him that the shepherd of the Ruchill might be safely housed somewhere; it was just possible he might have gone to the Craig Slap. But as he crossed the march-dyke between the Crammil and the Ruchill that hope was shattered, for suddenly out of the darkness the form of a sheep loomed dimly before him.

Jock Scott halted in despair. 'Dod!' he muttered, 'his sheep's no bielled.' There could be no doubt now that some accident had befallen his friend, for nothing less would have prevented him from folding his sheep on such a night. Somewhere on the hillside he or his body must be lying. But where? There was no possibility of a systematic search; all landmarks were hidden under the drift, and in the black darkness and howling storm even the shepherd stood bewildered. The sense of locality had almost left him; moreover he was stiff with cold, and his whole body ached; and worse, his hands and feet were becoming numb. In his weariness and utter wretchedness he was tempted to give up the search in despair. But as the thought of his friend lying on the hillside in the snow rose to his mind, with a gasp and a sob he once more set his face to the storm, gripping his staff firmly to guide and steady his steps.

The story of the friendship of the two shepherds is one of the commonest in the countryside. The tale of that dreadful night is the property of all; but the details you will nowhere hear. Indeed, the shepherd of the Crammil never could remember them himself. His recollection of the search was merely one of growing numbness and helplessness and ever-present despair. He had lost all hope of rescuing his friend; but it was his duty to continue the search so long as he could stumble on. And that was enough for him.

It must have been after about two hours of weary, hopeless wandering that at last he tripped over something soft at the foot of a high rock. In a moment he was on his knees and had scraped the snow from the body.

By this time feeling had almost entirely left his body and he was becoming unconscious. The rest of his task he performed mechanically. He lifted the body in his arms—whether alive or dead he knew not; but he vaguely remembered hearing the man groan as he raised him. How he got back he never knew. Where he was he did not try to recollect. He simply stumbled blindly forward under his load, picking his way by instinct. In a shadowy way he remembered wading burns and stumbling through drifts; but the whole tale of his wandering was confused. The only abiding impression of the night was one of dull, lasting, all-absorbing pain, and a sense of the most ineffable joy when at last the light of Wat's cottage shone through the darkness, and he tottered into the delightful warmth of the kitchen with the form of his friend hanging limp in his arms.

Laying Wat Dempster on the bed, he seized a flask of brandy offered him and gulped down mouthfuls of the fiery liquor. Then he threw off his dripping plaid and covered over the fire, digging his lifeless fingers into the very flames. Gradually these restoratives began to take effect, and the reaction that ever follows extreme cold set in. Slowly the numbness left his hands and feet; and as the warmth spread the hot blood coursed upwards, till gradually a delightful glow had overspread his body. With the warmth came remembrance of his friend. Again he seized the flask, forced some brandy down Wat's throat, stripped off his wet clothing and wrapped him in warm blankets. Then, with a few words to the terror-stricken wife, he sped out into the night.

The nearest farmhouse was two miles off; but the shepherd covered the distance in a very short time. There was nobody about. He rushed into the stable, saddled a horse, and in another minute was on his way again. The road was unfenced and all traces of it obliterated by snow; but in less than an hour he had covered the nine miles that lay between him and the nearest doctor; and in other three hours the broken limb was set, the doctor had left the cottage, and the shepherd of the Ruchill was restored to consciousness.

A fortnight had passed. Except in the rifts and crannies of the hill-tops all traces of snow had disappeared, and once more the green pastures and red ploughlands lay open to the eye. The snellness of winter had gone, and overhead a bright sun shone warmly on the clear freshness of a spring day.

Along the banks of the snow-swollen stream which seamed the glen with a streak of foam, a stalwart figure moved slowly towards the cottage where lay the shepherd of the Ruchill. In his look and gait there was something strange. His figure had lost its usual buoyant confidence; his long, swinging stride had become an indeterminate

step which was ever slower as he advanced; his eyes had an anxious and troubled look, and every few paces he would halt and gaze in profound thought into the turbid waters.

Jock Scott was on his way to visit the shepherd of the Ruchill for the first time since the dread night of the snowstorm; and he had misgivings about his reception. Never before had these two strange men met in such circumstances. Neither had ever before conferred such an obligation on the other; and now Jock Scott, shepherd of the Crammil, was torn with fears as to the possible behaviour of his friend.

Slowly and shyly he walked till he rounded the corner of the hill and came in sight of the cottage. Then, as a sudden resolution seized on him, he set his face to a stern, forbidding aspect, and strode across the greensward, stalked into the cottage, and flung himself into a chair by the bedside.

'Weel,' he demanded gruffly and defiantly, 'hoo are ye?'

The sick man started in surprise at the sudden entrance of Scott, and instinctively the usual retort-courteous rose to his lips:

'Dod! man, ye gi'e a body a fright,' he began; but, remembering, checked himself. 'Fine,' he answered gently.

The visitor grunted and looked suspiciously towards the bed. At heart no one could have been more truly sympathetic; but to put his sympathy into words was what he could not do; and almost before he was aware he had broken into the old recrimination.

'Dodsake! ye maun be as blind as a bat. Man, where in a' the warld were your e'en you nicht when ye fell? And ye maun be a very silly body to lie sae long efter a bit clout over a rock amang some saft snaw. Look at me—never in a' my life have I lain a day in my bed; but there you've been lying a fortnicht already—and the lambin' time coming on, and a' the puir sheep that should be sae weel lookit efter wandering about the hills like craws in a mist.'

The first attack, however, failed miserably; the sick man refused to be tempted. He knew that his sheep were as conscientiously looked after as if he were caring for them himself. Moreover, he was watching for an opportunity to express his thanks in some way. So he made the soft answer that turneth away wrath.

'There's nae doubt it was very stippit o' me,' he said; 'and I'm very much ashamed o' mysel'. But I'se warrant it'll no' be long afore I'm up and at the sheep again.'

The other's worst fears were realised. He had hoped by his own example to draw his friend to his old self again. But here he was returning good for evil; there was no saying what he might do next.

'What!' he cried, 'wad ye offer? Ye black-yird, if ye daur to rise out o' that bed till that

leg o' yours is better, not anither o' your sheep will be lookit by me.'

There was a short pause. The shepherd had come to the end of his tether. He could think of nothing more to say, and he sat silently awaiting the dreaded moment. Then slowly, in a hesitating voice, the sick man began:

'Aboot that—that nicht, ye ken, I wad just like'— But the sentence was unfinished, for at the first word the shepherd of the Crammil sprang to his feet, rushed to the window, and in a loud and unnatural voice drowned the feeble attempt.

'Just what I was feared o', he shouted. 'Man, we live in a maist rideeklous climate; ae day we're smooored in snaw, and the next plotted wi' heat. There's nae lippening to this kind o' wather. Now I'm sure there's a storm comin', and I'll ha'e to be aff to bield the sheep. Div ye mind'—

'Sit doon, ye stott,' interrupted the invalid, surprised for a moment from his gentleness; 'div ye no' see the sun?'

The attempt to create a diversion had failed. Unwillingly the shepherd resumed his seat, and resigned himself to the inevitable. Again there was a short pause. Then:

'As I was saying, I'm—I'm muckle obleeged to ye for—for what ye did that nicht. And as I said afore—no, I didna just dae that—but what I meant to say was, that I'm'—

During this short speech the face of the visitor wore a look of intense pain. Every word was a knife to him; he could stand it no longer, and before the sick man could proceed he had leapt to his feet again, his face blazing with suppressed feeling.

'It's thae deevils o' dongs at it again,' he cried. 'I never saw twae animals that could not 'gree, like yours and mine. I doot we'll ha'e to pairt wi' them. I maun off noo and redd them up.'

The fiction served its purpose. It lasted him as far as the door, so that the sick man could not break in to stop him. For a moment he stood grasping the handle, in doubt whether to close the door behind him. Then he turned back.

'Quite so,' he said, as if answering a question. 'I understand perfectly what ye mean; and I would just like to say that I hope—I hope—eh!' (but it would not come). 'See and sune be better,' he growled.

Then, shamefaced, cursing the world in general and himself for the greatest fool in it, he strode out to vent his rage on an imaginary conflict of two innocent colliers which at that moment were peaceably sleeping at their own firesides.

When the shepherd of Laignlands reached this point in his tale we had come to the parting of our ways. He told me the rest leaning on his

staff, while the sheep cropped the roadside turf and his faithful dogs kept watch with one eye to the flock and the other to their master.

'Ay,' he said, 'some folk in this world are made different frae ithers. Wi' ordinar' mortals like you and me a thing o' that sort would just ha'e made us greater friends; but no' thae twae herds. That nicht o' the snawstorm pit an end to their friendship. It's a queer thing, but they were never the same again. Ye see, it was this way: Wat Dempster, frae a kind o' gratitude, couldna just exactly use Jock Scott o' the Crammil the same as afore. When the herd o' the Crammil tried to rouse him, he just paid nae attention. Jock had a' the quarrelling to himself; and for fair shame he couldna continue it. So, through time, they fell into a kind o' strained civility to ane anither. I never saw very muckle o' them but at the market; and there ye couldna but notice the way each kept out o' the ither's gate. For six months they tried to live in this unnat'ral fashion; but it wouldna dae. Each man grew angered at himsel' and at the ither; and syne they cam' to the conclusion that it would be best for them to twine. Wat gaed north to a bit they ca' Goslin, and Jock gaed south to herd in Galloway. They may be there yet for a' I ken; and if ever ye're passing thereaway I've nae doubt they'll be very gled to see ye. It's a queer world,' concluded the shepherd, 'and queer folk bide in it.'

So he departed amidst a tumult of white-fleeced sheep, shaking his grizzled head over the strangeness of human affairs, and the last I heard of him as I turned away was an apostrophe to his over-zealous dogs, which for vigour of language even the shepherds of the Crammil and the Ruchill would not at their best have despised.

## TWO PORTRAITS.

THEY smile from no silv'ry, fretted frame,  
In the scented dusk of a lady's room;  
They are hidden away, where none can claim,  
And time does not tarnish their life-long bloom.

A face laughs out 'neath the lilac leaves;  
Blue eyes are beaming with great goodwill.  
Oh! Cupid sows in the springtide eves—  
A girl's heart took it, and keeps it still.

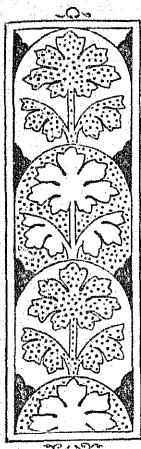
The other speaks of the end of all,  
Of wind and wave on a lonely beach,  
The withered leaf, the unanswered call;  
But the same man's face looks out of each.

The years may linger or haste away,  
Dear scenes be altered, and voices strange;  
But the old-time portraits know no decay,  
They do not fade and they cannot change;

They smile from no girdle of leafy bloom,  
No album holds them in dainty grace  
In the scented dusk of a lady's room:  
Her inmost heart is their resting-place.

EDITH RUTTER LEATHAM.





# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### A STORY OF CONVENT LIFE IN FAYAL, AZORES, AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 19TH CENTURY.



THE following narrative from island chronicles will illustrate the lot of a gently-reared Azorean girl ninety years ago. People are still living who knew some of the actors in the drama of life of that period, and heard the story from the actors themselves.

The principal events here recorded happened in 1809, when, and for some time subsequently, the inclination of the wealthy people of Horta was to place their daughters in convents—a destiny which was generally contrary to the wishes of the girls, if they were even consulted on the matter. This easy method of disposal saved the rich all expense of maintenance, marriage portions, &c., and freed parents from responsibility. Indeed, it was not unusual for the women of a family to be considered as inconveniences; so they were confided to the abbesses, who took charge of them and their conduct—if they could. That the vigilance of an abbess was sometimes faulty the narrative proves.

Donna Rosa Lima de Mello—the daughter of Lino José de Mello and his wife Donna Isabel, people who derived a large income from their property, which consisted principally of excellent vineyards in the island of Pico—was one of the most noted beauties of Horta. When Donna Rosa came of age her father at once expressed a desire that she should enter the nunnery of Gloria; and, though he well knew the girl had a profound aversion for the cloister, he used such urgent entreaties, severe threats, and influence of every kind that the poor girl's home-life soon became almost unbearable. Her father said she was a flirt, who thought only of marriage, and for that reason did not care to take the veil; and he threatened he would sell all his property and squander his wealth, leaving her a disobedient and shameless beggar. In fact, the girl suffered constant torment.

The unhappy girl now appealed to esteemed

friends of a family named Sequeira for sympathy and help, disclosing all her troubles, which so aroused their pity that Senhor Sequeira ventured to remonstrate with the girl's father; but his praiseworthy efforts on behalf of Donna Rosa were futile. Lino José de Mello was inflexible in his purpose, and determined that at any cost his daughter should be a nun.

At length poor Donna Rosa, to free herself from the life of misery in her father's house, yet with the firm determination never to take the veil, retired to the Convent of Gloria as a novice, and remained there two years. She now gave many proofs of the earnestness of her character: she was kind and obedient to all the nuns, respectful to the old, and a good and pleasant companion for the young.

Except on the occasion of some Church festival, Lino José de Mello seldom visited the novice. He had no time to waste on his daughter, being always burdened with business and the care of his more important landed property. The mother, poor creature, tearfully deplored her daughter's sad lot, yet she dared not oppose her husband's wishes. In his family the husband's will was supreme; without opposition or restraint he controlled as he thought best the possessions he inherited or acquired, and also the destiny of every member of the family.

At last the stern and autocratic father declared that his daughter's novitiate had been too prolonged; that the time had arrived when she must take the veil and become a nun. The solemn ceremony of public profession of the faith was therefore arranged, with all the splendour and pomp befitting the wealth and importance of Lino José de Mello. But Donna Rosa had been secretly and constantly advised by friends of the family to declare that she did not wish to profess, and even to make this declaration during the religious ceremony if necessary.

The appointed and fateful day arrived, bringing a great bustle to the convent. All the priesthood

of the island had been invited to assist at the imposing ceremony; a sumptuous banquet was being prepared at Lino José's residence, and the bells of the convent filled the air with their loud and joyful peals.

All the arrangements were completed, and the priests were robing in the sacristy. The church of Gloria was filled to overflowing with spectators awaiting the religious rites. But now a graceful figure was indistinctly seen in the grated choir of the church in which the nuns took part in the solemn services! The figure came close up to the grating—it was the handsome Donna Rosa—and in a clear voice, which reached all those present, declared firmly, 'Be it known to every one that I do not wish to take the veil. They force me to it.'

An unusual and confused murmur arose throughout the building. The women left their seats on the floor to get a better view of the speaker, and the eyes of every one were fixed on the grating; the priests came to the door of the sacristy to ascertain what had occurred; and the men talked in loud whispers. A scandalous occurrence, in fact, had taken place.

Lino José de Mello, wearing a coat and waistcoat of rich Indian silk, knee-breeches and silken hose, silver-buckled shoes, and glittering sword, with cocked hat under his arm, was at that moment seated near the high altar upon one of the chairs he had provided for his guests and other important persons. At this unexpected development the inhuman father, his face white with rage, also rose, and, walking down the central aisle to the body of the church, called thence to his daughter that she must ask leave from the Mother Superior to be allowed to speak to him in the reception-room. Then, quickly leaving the church, by following the outer wall of the convent he made his way to a porch gay for the occasion with a floral arch, and, entering the house, soon reached the second floor, where his daughter—pale and nervous, and supporting herself with difficulty against the grating of the reception-room—awaited him.

Lino José de Mello now closed the door; then, unsheathing his sword, pointed and gleaming, he turned to his daughter and uttered these words: 'You will not take the veil? You are within your right; but I swear by these white hairs of mine that to-day, when you go home, I will bury this steel in your breast and will afterwards kill myself. Our fate is sealed; the shame will be but for a few hours. My curse be upon you!'

'I will take the veil,' exclaimed the terror-stricken girl; 'but I likewise swear to you, father, that it will only be for a short time.'

'Do as you please.'

Then they returned to their respective places in the church. Donna Rosa took the indispensable oath which gave away her bright young life, and

the ceremony continued without any further interruption. To all appearances she was resigned to her fate.

Some months later an English warship, a corvette, anchored in the Bay of Horta. It was then an old-established custom for foreigners arriving at Fayal to visit the nuns, a custom which was very pleasing and agreeable to the good women, as it broke the monotony of the cloister-life; and they invariably regaled the wearied mariners with sweetmeats and dainty luncheons.

The English corvette was delayed in harbour many days; and her captain, a handsome, well-built young man, was assiduous in his daily visits to the reception-room of the Gloria Convent, although the other officers would sometimes vary their walks by going as far as the Monastery of St John. The extraordinary beauty of Donna Rosa did not escape the gallant sailor's notice, and many were the conversations he had with her in French, a language they both knew well. Who knows what they were saying and how they planned?

The reception-room had two iron gratings, with the bars rather wide apart; and close by, let into the wall, was an upright revolving cylinder, having only one opening just wide enough to admit of the nuns placing therein abundant supplies of their sugared and other dainties, and giving the recipients space to take out the gifts when, and only when, the opening was turned towards them. Donors and receivers were alike invisible to each other.

During one of the captain's visits Donna Rosa handed to him, in the presence of the other nuns, a crystal plate containing a fine linen napkin and some sweetmeats; but when the plate came back to the interior of the convent there was a small steel file between the folds of the napkin. Not even the spies discovered the plot.

The corvette still lay at anchor in Horta Bay, although the supplies of fresh food and water for which she called at the island had been aboard several days.

One of Donna Rosa de Lima's companions in the convent was a nun about her own age, Donna Marianna Isabel Labath, who was of an illustrious Fayal family. Whether she entered the convent voluntarily or was forced into it we do not know; but certain it is that she was very anxious to leave it. Owing to their affinity of sentiment, she formed, whilst in the cloister, a very close friendship with the daughter of Lino José de Mello. They were almost inseparable, and talked together for hours in their respective cells.

As is well known to those who are acquainted with the locality, one of the wings of the Gloria Convent extends half-way along the narrow street named Travessa da Carrasca, having in its front only a high blank stone wall. This is still very lonely at night; but it was much more so at the period of which we write, the total absence of lamps and its narrowness causing it to be extremely

gloomy. The iron-barred window of Donna Rosa's cell was the second counting from the side of the Rua do Meio towards the old Rua da Misericordia, and it overlooked the Travessa da Carrasca.

It was a calm, dark night, the only light being from the stars, which shone vividly overhead. Midnight had already struck when some sailors from the corvette, accompanied by their captain, silently approached the convent along this Travessa. Some one expected them, without doubt, for the window of Donna Rosa's cell was at once raised with great caution, and, directly the individuals beneath were recognised, the rattle of the iron bars—some of which slipped through the rings surrounding them—was heard, and an aperture large enough to permit the passage of a woman's body was formed. When this was done a woman's voice from the window whispered to those below, in French, 'All is ready!'

The English sailors came close under the window of the cell, unfolded a large piece of sailcloth which they had brought from the ship, and held it up securely, breast-high. Then the captain, who had superintended all the preparations with the utmost care, called, 'Now!' Without further parley Donna Rosa at once threw herself from the window, which is about twenty-three feet above, into the road. The strain was great even for the sailors; but the men held on to the cloth tightly, so that, beyond being a little dazed from the fall, the fugitive happily suffered no hurt. She at once got up, took the English officer's arm, and they made their way together to the Rua do Meio.

The sailors evidently expected a second fugitive, as they resumed their former position and again stretched out the sail. Another nun, Donna Marianna Isabel Labath, then took up her position at the window, and, bending her body forward towards the road, was about to throw herself out as her companion had done; but she hesitated, said a few words in a tremulous voice to those awaiting her below, and withdrew. As she spoke to them in Portuguese, the sailors were unfortunately unable to understand her. What Donna Marianna had really said was that she feared to take so dangerous a leap, and that they must wait whilst she tore up the sheets from her friend's bed and made a rope with which to let herself down. However, the doing of this took some time; and Donna Rosa de Lima and the captain of the corvette, dreading an awkward encounter with the people of the town, continued on their way in the direction of the sea, leaving Donna Marianna up in her dark cell preparing the means of descent. Evidently she was delayed in her preparations; and the sailors, being ignorant of what she had said, and not seeing her again, naturally thought she must have relinquished all intention of escaping. Hearing footsteps in the distance, and fearing discovery, they started off in haste after their captain.

There was no time to be lost; the ship's boat, which awaited them just off the shore in front of the chapel of Boa Viagem, came close to the beach, and they quickly stepped on board. The captain was standing in the stern, and the fugitive was seated near him. The boat was pulled off at once to the corvette, whose twinkling lights were visible out in the middle of the bay.

In the convent Donna Marianna had at last succeeded in fashioning a rope from two sheets; and, thinking the sailors still awaited her below, she tied one end of the rope to a bar of the window and commenced sliding down. But when half-way to the ground the knot joining the two sheets gave way, and the poor nun fell to the ground. Fortunately the weeds under the convent walls grew tall and thick, and saved her from very severe injuries. As it was, she was badly bruised, and, completely deserted, was unable for the moment to decide what to do. Her injuries, though painful, did not as yet hinder her from walking; and, knowing that the Boa Viagem was the place agreed upon for embarking, she started off in that direction. Down the Travessa da Carrasca and across the Rua do Meio, Travessa da Boa Viagem, and the wide stretch of sandy beach she struggled in the hope of overtaking her friend. When, breathless and in great pain, she reached the water's edge, she could just discern the outline of a boat disappearing in the distance, and she called to those on board for help, but they were already too far away to hear her.

Not one solitary light was visible in any of the houses which face Horta Bay, and, except for the cry of some nocturnal sea-bird, the beach was as silent and lonely as the grave. The poor girl was lost, abandoned, and she wept bitterly over her misfortune. Where to go or what to do she could not imagine. It occurred to her to return to the convent. But how was she to do so? The knotted sheets had parted; one, being tied to the broken bars, fluttered far out of her reach, like a streamer in the wind. She thought also of putting shame aside and going home to knock for admittance; but at this season of the year all the members of the family were attending to the grape harvest over in Pico, and the house was empty.

Benumbed with fear and bathed in tears, the unhappy girl sought shelter beneath the arcade of the market, at a short distance from the chapel of Boa Viagem. Fortunately at that season the nights were short. Within a few hours some one would be certain to find her there, and would perhaps afford her the necessary help in her distress. And so it happened.

Francisco do Conto, an attorney's clerk, and the father of three nice, merry girls, was a habitual early riser. On this morning he left his house at dawn and walked as far as the Boa Viagem, whence he could look out on the bay and see if any ships had come to anchor during the



complained to the General of the district, resident in Angra, Terceira, who in his turn addressed himself officially to the British Government, denouncing the fact that an officer of the Royal Navy of that country had been involved in these unseemly adventures. The English Government paid due attention to the complaint; a court-martial was held in London upon the matter, with the result that the captain of the corvette had to suffer, as punishment, being stationed for two years in the Mediterranean, one of the pleasantest places in the world. Naturally enough Donna Rosa spent a portion of those two years

in Italy, and at various other places on the shores of that beautiful sea. When the term of her lover's punishment had expired he returned to England and there married her, surrounding her with everything conducive to happiness and comfort. He attained the high post of Admiral in the British Navy, and died at an advanced age.

Within recent years Senhor Francisco Antonio da Silveira went over from Fayal to England on a visit to his then widowed aunt and her only child. Her long life has also come to a close since then. Would she perchance have been happier in the convent?

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

### CHAPTER XX.—A WIFE ON THE OCEAN WAVE.

**E**VERY vestige of the storm had swept out of the sky before sunset, and the wind died away, though the sea was still heavy and sulky.

We were pacing the deck, enjoying the wide horizon and the brighter aspect of things, when one of the men suddenly sang out, 'Steamer astern, sir,' and Lyle came out with his glasses to inspect her. All we could see, however, was a plume of black smoke rising against the soft mother-of-pearl tints of the western sky.

'A steamer, certainly,' said Lyle; 'probably one of the West Indian boats. We're about in their track. We shall see her again to-morrow most likely. Ah, there's dinner, and I'm about ready for it. It'll be quite a treat to eat without the fiddles on.'

Denise was in better spirits now that we were really on the way home, but every now and again she fell thoughtful, and I knew she was troubled about Vaurel and Lepard.

As for me, that plume of black smoke against the pale sky was constantly in my mind, but it was only when Denise had retired for the night that my thoughts came to a head and took definite shape. I had a talk with Lyle, and a proper legal consultation with Dayrell, and then my mind was made up, and I saw my way out of one at least of our difficulties.

When Denise came on deck next morning we were going only half-speed, and the West Indian was toiling up about four miles astern.

'She's catching us,' said Denise, stopping to watch her.

'Yes; we're allowing her to.'

'Oh—why?'

'Because, my dear, she will help us out of one of our difficulties, and save us going to Southampton at all, and so shorten the time it will take us to get to Vaurel.'

'How, Hugh?' she said, looking somewhat startled.

'As soon as she draws abreast of us, you and I and Dayrell will go on board of her and ask the Captain to marry us.'

'Oh Hugh!'

'Yes, dear, I know. But if you think it over for a minute or two, you will see that it is the very best thing we can do.'

'But I have no clothes.'

'You look lovely in these.'

And so she did, in her blue dress, and the reefer jacket and blue stocking-cap in which she had come on board at St Malo; but she looked down at herself and made a whimsical face.

'We will leave Dayrell on board if they will have him, and then we'll steam straight for St Nazaire and Vaurel. I know you are full of anxiety about him and the Colonel.'

'Yes,' she said, and pondered deeply.

'I could get some things at Nantes,' she said presently.

'Of course, while we are coaling. I thought of that.'

The pretty brow was wrinkled and the ripe red lips pressed tight with the weight of her thoughts, but at last she said consentingly, though not by any means effusively, which, no doubt, would have been too much to expect, 'Perhaps it is the best thing we can do.'

'I'm sure of it. I have been thinking of it all night.'

'Are you quite sure the Captain can marry us all right?'

'Quite sure. The captain of a ship can do pretty much anything he chooses.'

'But will it be all proper and legal?'

'Quite. I knew it was so, but to make quite sure I consulted Dayrell and Lyle before I decided to propose it to you, and they confirm me.'

'I must get a hat from somewhere,' she said.

'Don't,' I said. 'You look just lovely in that toque.'



'We can, of course, but we don't want to, for this reason. We ought to have kept a most important appointment down near Nantes yesterday morning. Our not having done so may be upsetting plans on which very grave consequences depend, and every hour we are away may make matters worse. If you will do what we want, we shall also ask you to give Mr Dayrell passage to London, and then we shall go full steam for Nantes, and so we can save at least a couple of days. It is a matter of most extreme urgency. I should probably not be far wrong in saying it is a matter of life or death;' and I saw Dayrell prick up his ears.

'Weel, weel!' said the old man, regarding Denise with a fatherly eye, 'I've had bairns on board, and many a burying, but I never had a marriage. And it's your wish, young leddy?'

'Yes, Captain, if you will be so good.'

'I suppose I have the right?' he said, turning to Dayrell.

'Yes; you have the right, Captain. And I have the special license we got for use in Southampton. But you won't need that. All you have to do is to make an entry in your logbook, and forward a copy of it to the Board of Trade, and Mr and Mrs Lamont will be tied up as tight as if the Archbishop of Canterbury had done it in Westminster Abbey. I'll see to all that for you.'

'Then I'll do it, Mr Lamont,' he said; and with a twinkle of pleasure in his eye, he added, "'It is na for your silver bright, but for your winsome leddy.'"

'When'll it be?' he asked.

'Just as soon as you like, Captain. We've been ready these three days past.'

'My! This'll set the ship agog. We've had a pretty tough time lately; broke a blade off our propeller two days ago—that's why we can't get on any faster. You won't mind the ladies coming to the wedding, miss?' he asked anxiously.

'Oh no, I suppose not, Captain,' said Denise; 'but it will have to be a very quiet wedding, for I haven't got any wedding garments, you see.'

The Captain grew thoughtful. Whether he was trying to puzzle out why Denise was so ill-provided, or whether he was wondering how he could make good the deficiency, I could not be sure. It was the latter, however.

'We'll want just a wee bit time to get ready,' he said. 'Your boat can keep up with us, I suppose, Mr Lamont?'

'Easily, Captain. She can do sixteen knots.'

'That's all right; then we'll be losing no time, and you not much, if you stop on board for a bit. We can't make above twelve. You'll stop with us, then, and I'll introduce you to some of my passengers. They'll be delighted at the idea of a wedding. We'll have it in the afternoon, and in the evening after dinner we'll have a dance on deck. I was just wanting something to waken things up. This is grand. I'm really very

much obliged to you for coming and suggesting it.'

'It is we who are under very great obligations to you, Captain,' I said, 'and any arrangements you make will please us.'

'Permit me, ma'm'selle,' he said, and bent down and crooked his arm towards her with old-fashioned courtesy. Denise rose and took it, looking somewhat bewildered, and he led her out and along the deck, we following.

'I will put you in charge of Señora del Caltera,' said Captain Rougvie. 'She'll be delighted. She is the daughter of the governor of Porto Rico, just married herself, and going home on her wedding trip. She's been finding it gay dull, and this'll do her good.'

He led Denise along to a group of men who stood talking round a lady lying in a deck-chair. The group opened as we came up, and they all eyed us with much curiosity; the lady, who had very brilliant black eyes and a dark vivacious face, regarding Denise much as she might have inspected a new zoological specimen brought along for her inspection.

'Señora,' said the Captain, 'we are going to have a wedding on board, and this lady is the bride.'

'Ah, Señor Capitan,' she cried, jumping up with a clap of the hands and her eyes snapping, 'you are dear good man. If I had chosen I would not have ask anything better.—My dear,' she said, taking Denise by both hands, with an assumption of motherliness which was infinitely amusing, for there could not have been many months between the girls' ages, 'I am sharmed. It has been ver dull.—Manuel, a chair for the señorita,' she said quickly in Spanish; and one of the gentlemen, who was evidently her husband from the way she ordered him about, hastened to stretch a chair for Denise's use.—'Now, you others, run away, while the señorita and I arrange things;' and in two minutes they were chattering away in French like a pair of magpies, while Dayrell and I were welcomed by the men, who had evidently found the voyage almost as dull as had the señora herself.

There were several Spaniards among them, but the greater number were Englishmen—planters from the islands, merchants, government officials, and so on, and they were all very pleasant and friendly.

As the matter had to be explained, I told them of our adventure and the reason for our coming on board, and they became still more hospitable; and as it seemed too bad that Lyle should be missing all the fun, I begged Captain Rougvie's permission to have him across also.

'Why, certainly, Mr Lamont; ask your skipper to come aboard at once. I'm quite sure he's a decent fellow or you wouldn't have him running your boat for you.'

So I called down to Barnes, who was towing alongside all this time, to go back to the yacht and beg the Captain to join us on board the liner,



and to state that he, Barnes, would take charge of the schooner.

'Hugh!' came to my ears from the direction of the ladies, and I found Denise beckoning to me. 'Señora del Caltera desires to make your acquaintance.'

I bowed before the gleaming face and murmured my gratification in French.

'I spik English, sare,' she said. 'I am sharmed to make ze acquaintance of your beautiful vife.'

'That is very kind of you, I'm sure. Mademoiselle has been pining for the sight of a lady's face for three days past.'

'Ah yes, I am zure!' she said, with a merry laugh and an arch look; 'but it is ver dull, ver *triste*, when ze sea is way op zere'—pointing half-way up the sky—'and ze ship she roll ovaire and ovaire and everybody is seek—oh, so seek!—ugh!' and she crumpled up her face in a grimace which expressed her feelings fully.

'And your friend?' she said, looking towards Dayrell. 'He is merry boy. I will know him also.'

I called Dayrell and presented him in due form.

'*Mais, mon dieu,*' she said, turning to Denise, '*qu'est ce que c'est que ça*—Linkonsinfeels?'

Denise explained the point to her, and she was pleased to say that all the *avocats* she had met had been very nice men and very good company.

I told her that Dayrell would remain in the ship when we went away, and she said, 'Ah, zat is good. I am glad. I am tired of my hussband—*tiens!*' tapping Denise merrily on the arm, 'I should not said zat to you, *ma petite*. All same, we shall be goot friends, Mistaire Dayrell-Linkonsinfeels. You will amuse me, is it not so?'

'I shall be delighted,' said Dayrell, and he evidently looked upon himself as in for an unusually good time, and I hoped he would not get into any mischief.

'Ah, lonch!' cried the senora as the gong rang through the ship. 'We will go together, *ma chérie*, and afterwards we will see,' and she nodded her smart little head many times very knowingly.

The time came round at last when I stood in the saloon, with Dayrell and Lyle by my side as best men, awaiting my bride.

The passengers clustered thick along the side seats, and the doorways were blocked with stewards and stewardesses and surreptitious passengers from the other end of the ship, all wide-eyed and expectant. Captain Rougie stood in the space between the two centre tables before an improvised reading-desk, over which were draped the Union-jack and the French tricolor. He looked distinctly nervous, and when he wasn't looking anxiously towards the door of the saloon, he was glancing over the words

of the marriage service, so that they should run free and smooth when the time came; for, as he explained again afterwards, he had never had occasion to use it before, and it was not at all familiar to him. And, indeed, I may say that when the time did come he boggled at some parts as though they astonished him, and it was with difficulty that he got through.

We stood waiting so long in that state of nervous discomfort which a wait under such circumstances always accentuates, that if we had been ashore I might have feared that something untoward had happened to the bride's horses, or that her heart had failed her at the last minute, or that 'Young Lochinvar' had unexpectedly come upon the scene. But of the two latter possibilities I had no fear, and here on board ship the first was out of question, and I could not understand what was keeping them. But that was because I did not understand the Señora del Caltera; as, indeed, how should I, seeing that I had not known her half a day?

It was all arranged by that vivacious young lady to satisfy her sense of the fitness of things and to give it due effect, and it was only when the Captain, in his nervousness, was looking round for some one to send to inquire if they intended coming at all that a buzz rose in the farther passage, and swelled, and burst out all round the room; and everybody stood up and craned their necks, and the little mobs in the other doorways exploded into the saloon by reason of those behind them who insisted on seeing.

And when I raised my eyes my heart leaped up into my throat and stuck there for a moment, till my eyes grew moist and dim, so that I could scarcely see the radiant vision that came slowly along between the tables towards me.

My wife has always been the loveliest woman in all the world to me, and in her stocking-cap and reefer coat no other woman ever could compare with her. But never tell me that clothes can't add to beauty.

Here was no stocking-cap and reefer jacket, but in their place a stately vision of shimmering white silk which trailed along the floor behind her and added to her height, and billowing lace which enveloped her like a halo from head to foot, and hid and heightened all her beauty. A tiny spray of orange-blossom gathered the lace on the shining coils of her hair and added the one touch of colour—until she drew near and raised her eyes to mine, and then, through the dimness of my own full eyes, I looked into hers, my love, my bride, and all the glories of heaven shone upon me.

I remember that I almost feared to take her hand—there was a sense of sacrilege in it—till she put it trustfully into mine, and we stood before the Captain, who was almost as much taken aback as I was at this transformation-scene.

The señora, I believe, stood behind us, mothering the bride, and coruscating with delight like a pin-wheel, I am sure, for that state lasted in her all the rest of the day.

But I did not see her then, nor any one at all but Denise and the honest grizzled face of Captain Rougvie, and I have little recollection of the service; but I have George Dayrell's word for it that everything was done correctly and in order, and that we were tied as tight, as he said, as the Archbishop himself could have done it in Westminster Abbey.

Señora Fireworks behind had held herself in during the ceremony with difficulty, and when it was finished, and Captain Rougvie, beaming a speechless benediction, had shaken us both very heartily by the hand, and, after the manners and customs of his country, had given Denise a very hearty kiss which took her very much by surprise, we none of us knew exactly what to do next, for the position was unique for most of us. Dayrell, indeed, looked as if he knew what he would like to do, and the señora looked as though she feared the epidemic might spread her way, and so she solved the difficulty by going off with a whiz and a bang.

She sprang up, her dark eyes blazing with enjoyment, whirled her arms like the sails of a windmill, and cried, 'Heep, heep, 'rah!' at the top of her voice. The Anglo-Saxons in the crowd responded lustily, and gave it with such a swing that the Spaniards' faces puckered at the noise, and we were all very jolly and happy.

Then the stewards came in masterfully and made it plain to us that they would prefer our room to our company, as they had business of importance on hand. So we all went up on deck, and found it covered in, above and about, with canvas, while lanterns, plain and coloured, hung all round in profusion and transformed the work-a-day deck into fairyland.

And there Denise held a reception, for the señora was Mistress of the Ceremonies and insisted on it; and I think every soul on board, and every man who could be spared from the *Clutha*, attended it.

Then at last the dinner-gong rang out a new triumphant note and summoned us to the wedding feast. And it was a feast indeed, with a most miraculously compounded wedding-cake which did the cook infinite credit; and he watched our appreciation of it from one of the doorways, and retired satisfied with himself and his handiwork and with us.

And so the merry feast progressed, with much popping of corks and much laughter, and finally with one or two brief speeches.

Somewhat similar doings, on a smaller scale, were taking place in the forecabin and in the men's quarters, and the whole ship held high festival.

Then the ship's band played under the awning,

not altogether untunefully, and what they lacked in skill they made up for in good-will; and some of the ladies danced, with the officers and the Spaniards and some of the planters and government men as partners. Presently Denise and the señora slipped away; and when my dear one came back, dressed in her own clothes and the reefer coat and stocking-cap, I knew it was time to go.

But getting away was no easy matter, for every one wanted to shake us by the hand and wish us good luck; and Captain Rougvie vowed that the obligation was all on his side, and that he had never enjoyed himself so much. George Dayrell gave us his blessing with paternal unction; and Señora del Caltera positively shed tears as she kissed Denise many times on both cheeks, and made her promise to call on her if ever she came to Madrid. And so at last the liner's siren bellowed to the yacht to stop for us; the yacht replied with a shrill squeak, and we found ourselves dancing on the glinting dark water, with the leviathan towering above and watching our passage with its rows of gleaming eyes.

A squeak from the yacht told them we had arrived, and then boom went the liner's signal-gun, and a flight of rockets brought us more good wishes. Then the big ship bellowed 'Goo-oo-oo-d-bye! Goo-oo-oo-oo-oo-d-bye!' till she seemed to be in mortal agony, and the very stars seemed to shudder at the sound; and our shrill pipe, which must have sounded to them like a small boy blowing into a key, squeaked back, 'Thanks! thanks! thanks! thanks! thanks!'

Then we turned our prow to the east and put on steam, and the long line of lights grew smaller and smaller, became a yellow blur, and passed out of sight. Denise and I stood watching them, our hearts too full for speech.

I had now to explain my further plans to Andrew Lyle. Our first kidnapping venture had been entirely successful. The next was of a different kind, and might possibly entail pains and penalties, the extent of which I could not gauge, as I had not cared to enter into the matter with Dayrell at all. True, the Colonel was a murderer and worse, for I count the man who conspires to ruin another's reputation and condemns him to a lifelong agony, worse by far than he who strikes down his victim and ends him. But even a murderer has his rights, and we had deprived him of those rights, and intended still to do so, in order to serve our own private ends. And although those ends might be for the righting of a great wrong, we were doing an absolutely illegal thing, and doing it with our eyes open.

When the table was cleared next morning, I asked Lyle to come back after he had been up on deck to cast his eye around; then I dismissed the steward, and told the Captain the whole story so far as it was known to us.

He was immensely interested, and upheld our position entirely.

'The man deserves no mercy, Mr Lamont,' he said warmly. 'And if I can help you to wring the truth out of him, I'm entirely at your service.'

'Where can we stow him? I don't want him anywhere here.'

'I'll see to that. He can have the engineer's cabin. Macpherson won't mind bunking forward under the circumstances. And when we've got him safe aboard where do you think of taking him to, Mr Lamont?' he asked.

'Well, I'm not quite decided. It really matters very little so long as we hold him without any risk of interference from the outside.'

I caught Denise's eyes fixed upon me with a strange, wistful look in them.

'Your wish is granted, dearest, whatever it is,' I said, laying my hand on her slim white one with its new broad gold band which I had bought in London, and which fitted marvellously.

'Could we—oh, could we?'—she said with a catch in her voice—'could we go to New Caledonia?'

'We can go anywhere where there is water to float us,' said Lyle stoutly.

'Then to New Caledonia we will go,' I said, and the diamond drops sparkled in my sweet wife's eyes once more.

'When Gaston is free and cleared of all stain I shall have nothing left to wish for,' she said.

'Truth will out, Mrs Lamont,' said the Captain vehemently. 'It never can be hid in this world—at least,' he added cautiously, 'not often. And we'll have it out of this man if we have to— Well, anyhow, we'll get it,' he concluded, with a clenching of the strong brown hand on the table.

But my wife's heart and my own were heavy with anxiety as to what might have happened at Cour-des-Comptes or elsewhere through our failure to be at the appointed place at the appointed time.

It was midday on Thursday when Croisic Point hove in sight, and an hour later the *Clutha* was moored alongside the coaling-shed at

St Nazaire with orders to cram in every pound that could be got into her bunkers in as short a time as possible, and Denise and I were jogging along towards Nantes as fast as a very slow train could take us.

Denise managed to purchase a flat straw hat in St Nazaire, and as the air of the land felt mild to our weather-beaten frames, she was able to discard the reefer jacket also, and, in great contentment, declared that she felt clothed like a Christian once more.

We must have been a godsend to the millinery shops of Nantes that afternoon, and the smiles and salaams which followed us right out on to the side-walks testified to the high appreciation in which we were held.

But what with the multitude of our calls, and the number of return calls we had to make to see that orders and alterations had been properly carried out, the afternoon was soon gone; and after a hastily enjoyed dinner at the *Hôtel de France*, I found myself speeding back to St Nazaire with a somewhat exhausted but triumphant little wife and three trunks full of feminine adornments, and in front of me the task of finding Vaurel, and a lurking fear as to how matters might be with him when I did find him.

I convoyed my wife and her spoils on board the yacht, commended her to Lyle's most careful keeping, arranged with him to be off the mouth of the Vilaine by six o'clock next morning, and then just managed to catch a train for Redon, and dropped off at Bessaney Station shortly after nine o'clock.

The night air was cool, and there was a fine rain falling, but I turned up my coat collar and walked briskly along the high-road towards Cour-des-Comptes.

I did not meet a soul all the way, and when at last I turned into the Château grounds and the house stood below me, all dark and silent, my anxieties were at a fine point, for a few minutes more would tell me how the land lay.

(To be continued.)

## THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

### SIBERIA.



REPORT on the Trans-Siberian Railway, prepared in a most able manner by Mr Cooke, British commercial agent in Russia, has been issued by the Foreign Office, and it is no exaggeration to say that it

is of the greatest importance to all having trade interests. Here will be found, stated in plain terms, the present condition of Siberia,

and a full account of the new railway, which will, when the present crisis in the East is over, bring into closer touch with Europe and America four hundred and fifty millions of Chinese and Japanese. But in Siberia itself there are vast commercial possibilities. The country will export enormous quantities of coal and grain, and will want in return all kinds of machinery, implements, and appliances. Among these Mr Cooke names rails and rolling-stock, shipping craft, boring apparatus and other



mining requisites, agricultural implements, building material, electric plant, dairy apparatus, and manufactured goods of all kinds. In Siberia the villages are rapidly developing into large towns, and the needs of the inhabitants will expand at a rapid rate. British manufacturers can get a large portion of this trade if they are careful, and if they remember that there are Continental and American competitors to deal with.

#### THE WASTEFULNESS OF ARTIFICIAL LIGHT.

In a thoughtful paper in *Cassier's Magazine*, Dr John Henderson deplores the wastefulness of present means of artificial lighting, more especially with reference to gas, and regards it as strange that, although so many have worked at the problem of obtaining cheap light, we are, at the end of the nineteenth century, so far behindhand. The efficiency of the steam-engine and of the dynamo has increased enormously during the past twenty years; but in the production of artificial light we have made but small advance during the same period. Out of every hundred tons of coal delivered at our gasworks something like ninety-eight tons are wasted so far as the production of light is concerned, and appear as useless heat. Nature has by some mysterious process, of which we have not yet learnt the secret, solved the problem of economical light. In the fire-fly we find a means by which abundant illumination is produced without the expenditure of any radiant heat discoverable by the most delicate instruments. When the physiological chemist can find out the means by which this little creature affords so much illumination, we shall be much nearer the solution of a problem of vast importance to mankind.

#### SAWDUST BRIQUETTES.

A method of converting sawdust into an admirable fuel has been introduced at the sawmills of Joseph Fialla, Austria, and the briquettes so produced are found to be valuable both for boiler furnaces and the domestic hearth. The process by which the sawdust is converted into this highly marketable product is as follows: After being impregnated with tarry compounds and heated to a certain temperature, the sawdust is passed over a metal plate heated by steam on its way to a screw-press, where the mixture is compressed into briquettes of convenient size. The factory turns out more than six million briquettes per annum, at a cost of about eightpence per thousand, the selling price being about four shillings for the same quantity. It is thus evident that the refuse of a large sawmill, which used to be regarded almost as so much waste, can be turned to very profitable account. The size of these sawdust briquettes is somewhat less than that of a common brick, and their heating value is about equal to that of

lignite, but they leave only about 4 per cent. of ash. There are many mills in this country where a similar industry could be established with advantage, especially at this time of dear coal.

#### TRANSMITTING ELECTRICITY WITHOUT LOSS.

In *Chambers* for last month appeared an article, 'Some Forecasts of Science,' giving an abstract of a remarkable paper by Nikola Tesla on the 'Problem of Increasing Human Energy.' This great electrician has made another discovery, or an ingenious combination of previous discoveries, as termed by the *Spectator*, to which we are indebted for an abstract. When electricity is sent long distances there is great loss of power; the conducting metal becomes hot, and the heat develops resistance. Professor Dewar and Professor Fleming are able to liquefy oxygen, air, and hydrogen, and these liquid gases have been found to have a very remarkable action upon metals cooled in them. This diminution of heat means a corresponding diminution of electrical resistance. Availing himself of this knowledge, Tesla proposes to carry a metal tube, immersed in a trough containing sawdust and water, and placed six feet below the surface, as far from the source of power as may be wanted. Through this surrounding material he will force a current of liquid gas, which will freeze the enclosed metal, and thus neutralise the heat generated by the passage of the electric current. In this way he hopes that no appreciable amount of electricity will be wasted in transmission.

#### MEAT PRESERVATION.

An improved process of meat preservation, the invention of a German engineer, is said to have given such good results experimentally that a trial shipment from Buenos Ayres has been arranged for. The meat is not treated with chemicals, but is enclosed in air-tight sterilised chambers, in which it is said to be perfectly preserved for an indefinite period. In the experiments referred to, freshly-killed meat, bones, and marrow were shut up in such a receptacle on 19th May, and sealed by the Minister of Agriculture at Buenos Ayres. A month later the chamber was opened by the same functionary, and its contents were found to be in perfect condition. Fuller details of the process will be awaited with interest, for at present it is difficult to see how the meat itself is sterilised innocuously without the usual boiling operation. Should the system be really effective it will have far-reaching applications, and will be a great boon to mankind.

#### CHEAPER GAS.

Dear coal necessarily means dear gas, and the complaints are many that the gas companies have raised their tariff from 20 to 25 per cent. In a recent paragraph we quoted the suggestion of

Professor Sylvanus Thompson that a non-luminous gas, highly suitable for cooking purposes or for employment in incandescent burners, should be supplied at a cheap rate. This gas could be rendered luminous by the addition of a hydrocarbon by the consumer. Such gas, which can be cheaply manufactured from the decomposition of water, is now extensively made in America; and Professor Chandler, in his presidential address to the Society of Chemical Industry, alluded to its employment in very hopeful terms. It seems that the question of its use came before the Health Department of New York, which, after careful investigation, decided in its favour. At present in America there are five hundred factories using this gas either wholly or in part; and last year it was estimated that three-quarters of the entire consumption consisted of carburetted water-gas. It is believed that such gas, under favourable conditions, could be sold for less than half the sum charged for coal-gas at its cheapest.

#### SNAKE-STONES.

There is a 'snake-stone' used by lithographers; but it is not of that well-known mineral that Mr Schwartz treats in his interesting communication to *Nature*. The snake-stones to which he refers are common in South Africa, and are described as white, porous substances; they are employed for the cure of snake-bite. When applied to the place where the reptile has bitten its victim, the stone is believed by the natives to draw the poison from the wound, after which the stone is left in a bath of milk, which withdraws the venom from the mineral, rendering it once more ready for use. It is a common belief that these stones originate in the head of a snake, and that they are analogous to bone; but a more reasonable suggestion is that they consist of pumice, which to an uneducated eye would seem to possess the structure of bone. In Germany it is no uncommon thing for credulous persons to carry about with them small nuggets of gold, which they believe have the virtue of drawing out from their bodies the evils induced by malignant influences. Sometimes a potato is carried with the same intent; and the belief in the virtues of the snake-stone seems to be of the same kind. Possibly the tradition is merely a survival of the old belief in the medicinal value of different minerals and precious stones, each having a specific effect upon the constitution of the person owning or carrying it.

#### THE SWIFTEST VESSEL AFLOAT.

Her Majesty's ship *Viper*, built at Newcastle for the British fleet of torpedo vessels, has once more afforded evidence of the value of the steam turbine system. At her trials on the measured mile she reached the extraordinary speed of forty-three miles an hour, a rate of progress which would not disgrace an express train on our

railways. Indeed, there are many lines in this country whose customers would be only too glad if something a good deal less than this speed could be guaranteed to them. It is certain that the turbine system is yet quite in its infancy, and that before long the Channel will be crossed by vessels propelled in this manner. Some, indeed, prophesy that the old methods with crank and piston-rod will be superseded altogether by this notable invention of the Hon. Charles A. Parsons. A feature of a turbine-driven vessel is absence of vibration, a quality which, apart from any question of speed, is a highly desirable one. In the trial of the *Viper* the steam pressure was two hundred pounds to the square inch. Now that the London County Council are considering the question of a new fleet of passenger steamers for the Thames, they will doubtless not fail to give due attention to the suitability of the turbine system for that purpose.

#### FIREPROOFING WOOD.

The large conflagrations which have occurred with appalling frequency of late years would have been impossible had the woodwork of the structures involved been rendered fireproof by one of the excellent processes now available. In the Ferrell process, so called because it has been invented and worked out by Mr Joseph Ferrell of Philadelphia, the wood to be treated is enclosed in a metallic chamber capable of resisting enormous internal pressure, and a chemically-charged fluid is forced into its pores by hydraulic means. Under this treatment the wood gains in weight, but can be as easily worked as before, while its capability of being varnished, polished, or painted is by no means impaired. At the same time, it is rendered so absolutely fireproof that a bonfire made of its shavings will refuse to burn; while a box constructed of the protected wood is, according to all reports, as serviceable against fire as a steel safe.

#### LIQUID AIR COMPANIES.

We have received the prospectus of a company which boldly states that liquid air 'will within a few years, if not months, supersede steam, electricity, compressed air, gasoline, and all other powers now in use.' Liquid air is, without doubt, one of the most wonderful products of modern times, and we do not yet know what great things may result from its employment; but these will be in the field of scientific research and not in the shape of commercial enterprise. In the prospectus referred to, the compiler carefully refrains from making any comparison between the efficiency and cost of liquid air as opposed to steam, and this is a curious omission, seeing that such a statement would at once give the reader information which he would greatly value. We will try to supply this omission. Taking the cost of a pound of liquid air as one penny—the estimate of

an American producer who has done much to encourage company promotion in this direction—we find that this will expand to eight hundred times its volume in assuming the aeriform condition; but the same quantity of water will expand to sixteen hundred and forty-five times its volume when assuming the form of steam; and as a good steam-raising apparatus will turn a pound of water into vapour at a cost of about the two-hundred-and-fortieth part of a penny, the conclusion is obvious that liquid air cannot compete with steam as a motive-power.

#### THE BANEFUL MOSQUITO.

While the question of the responsibility of the mosquito in spreading malaria is yet undetermined, pending the experiments now in progress, information comes from the second malarial expedition of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine that the germ which is the cause of the terrible malady known as elephantiasis has been discovered in the proboscis of the same insect. The same discovery seems to have been made simultaneously by Dr Low in England, in mosquitoes brought from Australia, and by Captain James in India, so that there is strong presumption that the case against the mosquito is proved. We see little of the deformities caused by elephantiasis in this country; but in tropical climates thousands fall victims to the disease, and its extirpation would be an enormous boon. Professor Koch regards the extermination of the infecting gnats, which would be a radical remedy, as quite impracticable on a large scale. The only practical method of dealing with malaria, he considers, is that of rendering it innocuous by thoroughly curing patients, as has already been done in cases of cholera, plague, and typhus.

#### A NEW FRUIT.

At a recent meeting of the Royal Horticultural Society a new fruit, a hybrid between the raspberry and the blackberry, made its first bow to

the public. This product, which promises to be of great value, was raised by Messrs Veitch, and has been named by them the 'Mahdi.' The Mahdi bears a general resemblance to the blackberry of our hedges, and in cultivation is trained in the same manner, while its taste reminds one of the raspberry. As its time of bearing comes about when the raspberry fails, and before the blackberry is ripe, the Mahdi fills in a gap just where it is needed; but it will not be ready for the market until next season. The new fruit is prolific, and has a handsome decorative appearance.

#### FUEL FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.

The high price of coal has had one good effect in directing attention to the possibility of maintaining fire by alternative methods. Peat has been spoken of over and over again as a substitute for coal, but it has not yet penetrated very far from the moors upon which it is found. However, the great rise in the price of coal has stimulated effort, and at the present moment there are several companies which profess to come to the rescue of the perplexed householder. The Peat Fuel Company offer sun-dried peat in blocks, and assert that a small quantity mixed with coal will prolong the life of the latter by more than 50 per cent. Another peat company at Dartmouth, Devon, will presently put a cheap fuel on the market. The Whittington Peat Coal Syndicate, of London, carbonise dried peat, and also offer peat gas for house use. Another process enables Captain Hood to dig up peat one day, and present it ready for use the next morning. This product will cost fifty shillings a ton in London; but one ton will last as long as five tons of coal! Another sanguine inventor makes dust and house refuse into a serviceable fuel. Sterilised sewage is the foundation of another patent fuel; while a factory is being erected in Essex for the making of yet another from the mud of the Thames!

## THE MOORISH TREASURE.

### CHAPTER V.



**S**UDDENLY a sound struck Wooly's ear—a sound most welcome, although astonishing. He could not be mistaken. He heard far along the passage before him the music of running water. He could hear the splash and gurgle, and so could Jack, to his immense joy also. For the latter's tongue was lolling out with thirst, and Wooly himself craved for a drink as he had never craved before, even on the polo-grounds of India or the sandy wastes of Egypt. So eager was he that he broke

into a run at the imminent risk of extinguishing his candle; and ere many minutes had elapsed he found himself on the brink of a most serious obstacle to his escape, and one not marked or shown in any way upon his map. It was water indeed—any amount of it; too much, in fact. It was very nice to drink. He soon settled that question; but in spite of the huge relief it gave him, he wished it had been anywhere but just where it was.

From an opening in the roof of the tunnel, rather to one side, a large and strong stream



poured down with tremendous force into a deep pool that it apparently had cut out for itself in the passage floor. This pool was of considerable length, and the torrent filled it with a wild turmoil of water that rushed violently along and disappeared at the farther end as suddenly as it had sprung from the rock above. Through the cloud of fine spray that filled the air, Wooly could dimly make out the tunnel that seemed to still continue its even upward course beyond the point where the water ended; so he concluded that the latter either found its way down a branch passage, or—disquieting idea—fell headlong down a shaft in the floor of the main one. If the latter, he might find it impossible to cross the well. It would be big, he knew, to be able to take such a volume of water so suddenly and quietly; at all events he must get into the pool and explore it at once. He would require all his strength and nerve for the job, and after all he had gone through he did not feel very fit. His stock of candles was getting unpleasantly low also, and he shuddered as he thought of himself exhausted and in darkness; nothing could save him then. Carefully he entered the water. Ugh! how cold it was as it crept higher and higher up his legs!

'Stay there, Jack,' he cried to the dog, 'while I explore this cold bath;' and, all obedience now, Jack stayed.

Shivering and grumbling, the A.D.C. moved slowly along. The water was up to his waist now, but didn't appear to get deeper. He kept close to the side, thus avoiding the full force of the fall by passing under it, and held on to any knobs or ledges that he could find. But he had all his work cut out for him in endeavouring to keep his candle alight under such difficult circumstances, and he wished that he possessed at least double the number of hands, and an extra foot or two as well.

When at last he reached the other end, which he did with his precious candle still alight, he saw with a sinking heart that his worst fears were verified. He found that the stream rushed violently down, not quite a perpendicular shaft, but a very steeply sloping passage which went *under* the main one, the one that led to deliverance. There it was close to him, with the steep water-chute beneath, going down into the depths with such strength and rapidity that he saw at once that it would be a most hazardous, if not impossible, feat to get down the slope sufficiently far to grasp the jagged lower edge of the upper tunnel and climb into it in safety. But there was no other way out of the fix, and so the effort had to be made.

Wooly could not understand where this water flowed out from the rock. He could imagine a spring far down inside, unknown and unsuspected; but it must have an outlet of some kind, he knew. Yet, except rain-water, there was not a drop nearer than Spain. Why, this spring would be a fortune

to anybody in itself could it be tapped. He had thirsty recollections of water being sold at three-pence a pail in dry seasons. However, he had no time now to speculate on these strange secrets of nature. He had a tough job to get through, and must hurry; and thus thinking, he turned round in order to fetch Jack, who of course had to go through with it as well as his master. But that perverse animal had had enough waiting already, and even as Wooly turned the little brute sprang into the pool with a yelp, and proceeded to swim vigorously towards him. But the current was strong. It was as much as Wooly could do to keep his feet, and in an instant the dog was upon him. Like a flash he saw that his little friend must be swept past him unless he could seize him; and, loosing his hold of the friendly knob, he made a dash at the struggling animal. That instant his feet were swept from under him like bits of cork, and down he went into the rushing water. There was a gurgling cry, and for one brief black instant a desperate struggle for life, and then the waters swept on to their unknown bourn, and with them went the secret of the treasure, now lost to man for ever.

'Here, quick, give me the rifle. Look sharp, you idiot,' whispered one of the Duffer officers to his brother subaltern, Bob Scarlet, as these two individuals were cruising around the Rock in the early morning sun, taking flying-shots at the rock-pigeons as, scared by Bob's horrible howls, they whirled out of the water-caves at a rate that would try the metal of a Monte Carlo *Grand Prix* winner at least. 'I see a seal, man alive! There's his head sticking out just on that ledge of rock to the left there. Steady! That's it. Now, pull gently towards him, and I'll warm him up. How lucky I brought the rifle as well—eh? Oh, do shut that silly head of yours, and don't chuckle like that!'

'Can't see him myself; but I'll bet you a dollar you miff him all the same, fatty,' retorted Bob. 'That a seal! Why—hold hard,' he suddenly yelled. 'Don't shoot. Why, it's a man's head.' With that he started pulling as he had never pulled before, madly, frantically, and to such good purpose that before his companion had grasped the situation and, putting down the rifle, got out another pair of oars to help him, he had driven the boat up to the ledge. 'Why it's old Sheep! What the——? How the——? Why the—— did he get here? I thought he had gone on leave last night. Is he dead? Here, fatty, you fat juggins, help me get his legs in. Are you struck silly? That's it; there he is. Now, lay him along there! By Jove! how he's cut about! What on earth can he have been up to, to get mauled about like that?' Thus wondering, the two got the poor battered body into the boat, covered it with coats, and then set to work to get home, rowing like galley-slaves.

Rosier Bay was the first available landing-place. It was soon reached, and a man of the guard there sent off for a doctor. Meanwhile they tried all they knew to produce some sign of life in the A.D.C., the men of the guard standing round, a sympathising group, offering respectful help and advice whenever they got a chance. Soon the doctor appeared, and by his orders Wooly was put on the guard-room stretcher and carried away to his own quarters near the Convent—as Governor's House is called—and presently, under skilful treatment, was brought back to life again, and then, under the influence of an opiate, went off into a long dreamless sleep.

When he awoke, hours after, the first voice he heard was that of the faithful Davie, who bade him lie quiet and not talk yet about his fall over the cliff. 'Doctor's horders, sir.'

Fall over the cliff! Could it be possible? Was that what had befallen him, and left him in this bruised and patched condition? Had he only dreamed those strange adventures in weird tunnels and wild waters that were crowding back into his still aching head? Was the treasure only the creation of a mind shaken by a bad accident? He was almost inclined to think so. Then he saw, out of the corner of his eye, Davie on his knees on the floor collecting something that appeared to be scattered over the carpet.

'What are you up to, Davie?' he asked suddenly.

'Collectin' a lot o' bits o' glass, sir,' Davie replied, 'that was rolled in yer 'andkerchief, as was in yer pocket. I'm afraid they'd cut yer feet, sir, when you get hup, so I'll just chuck 'em out o' winder, sir; hand'—

'Give them to me, Davie,' said his master, 'in the handkerchief;' and, to his man's wonderment, the A.D.C. placed the lot under his pillow and said no more; but he cogitated deeply. 'Fall from the cliff,' rang in his brain; and when, later on, he saw many sympathisers, he kept his own counsel, and accepted the theories of his fall that were suggested to him with silent acquiescence; though the good people of 'Gib' never could quite understand why his recollections of what led to his fall were so vague, and how two such active individuals as Jack and the 'Sheep' came to tumble over the cliff both together.

Jack never was seen again. He had reaped the reward of his many canine crimes, and, after leading his master to the threshold of death's door, had himself knocked and been admitted.

Wooly recovered completely, and went home for his leave after all, and had, as he said, a 'ripping good time.' Old Squarey and other bloodsuckers of the same kind were paid in full, much to their astonishment and disgust, for they had not half-squeezed him dry yet, and they thought it very hard lines indeed, especially as he never borrowed from them again.

What was also strange, a marriage came off ere

the leave was over; and when Mrs Wooly returned with her husband, her diamonds excited the admiration of all beholders. Never had such stones been seen on anybody under royal or millionaire rank before.

Wooly has no recollection of any of the events subsequent to his wild dash and struggle in the torrent. He supposes that it had its outlet under the sea in the recesses of a water-cave, and that he was shot up to the surface and carried or drifted out on to the rock on which he was found. His watch and chain still lie somewhere hidden in that mysterious stream, and with them the Moor's gift. Thus is the secret kept after all, and the treasure still awaits an owner.

Wooly and his wife have walked for hours and hours about the neighbourhood where the former first saw the monkeys, but no trace of a certain crack between two rocks could they ever find. The fall of earth must have completely filled it in; and as they are now at the other end of the world, they can't continue the search. But they live in hope.

The gunners still grub about their old castle; and the M.P. has not yet asked his question in the House, and thus the great injustice to the alien race continues, and is likely so to continue to the end of all time.

#### THE HOLIDAY.

HE gave his eyes to the skies of blue,

His ears to the birds and bees;

And he gave his heart to the winds that flew  
Away over empty seas;

And he saw the depths that he could not sound,

And he heard the unworldly songs;

And his heart, unfettered, fled past the bound  
Of a tired life's rights and wrongs;

And he neither wrought nor played nor slept,

Nor troubled with good and ill;

And his dreams were vague as the scents that swept  
And sweetened the lonely hill.

And there from morning till eve he lay,

And never a joy he sought.

But he came home glad at the close o' the day,

Because he had lived for nought.

J. J. BELL.

#### \* \* \* TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3rd. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.

4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### THE SILVER LOTAH.

By MAYNE LINDSAY.

IN FOUR PARTS.—PART I.

**W**HEN he retired from the 99th Bengal Infantry, Lieutenant-Colonel Matthias discovered, a little to his astonishment, that he was still a young man. He was a bachelor and a sportsman; and these happy conditions of life had kept his eye clear and his muscles supple in spite of his eight-and-forty years. He did not enjoy the prospect of declining with a limited income to Bath or Cheltenham. He was in no mind to drag out an existence between the local club and the circulating library. Therefore he decided to remain in India until at least his hands should have lost the power to swing a gun to shoulder. With this object he rented a bungalow at Phulgarh—in the Eurasian quarter, because an unfortunate love-affair had stultified his concern in European society—and settled down to cultivate his rose-trees and inspect his gun-barrels. When the mood seized him or *khabbar* reached his ears, he gave his battery an extraordinary overhauling, and disappeared into the neighbouring jungles, to return with a bag that varied from a snipe to a tiger, according to the measure of his enterprise and good fortune.

Phulgarh is a little, lovely station on the borders of the Himalayas. It nestles at the foot of the mountains, on a plateau shut from the plains by a low rampart of crumbling hills to southward; and about it, elbowing the tea-plantations and the patches of cultivated land, and the tiny canals that irrigate the district, the forest of Timli stands sentinel. It borders the white road to the plains where it climbs over the Timli Pass; it covers the undulating tableland to east and west and north and south, and it runs up into the horse-shoe of the hills, and points a finger to the not-far-distant buffer states of the north. Colonel Matthias, looking from his veranda with the eye of the hunter, could see peaks and crags beyond

the lower mountains that were far in the countries of the fighting tribes, in lands only trodden by sportsmen and politicals among Englishmen.

The cottage was a modest one; and its garden, full of roses and purple bougainvilleas and heavy-scented stephanotis, was not too large to allow a biscuit to be tossed from the dining-room table across the aloe-hedge into the road. The hum of life droned all day long through the open doors, and the bright dresses of the passers-by made a kaleidoscopic picture beneath the dazzling sky. Colonel Matthias, seeing and unseen, found diversion in watching the life that lay about him.

On one side of the bungalow an immensely thick bamboo-hedge shut out a house whose massive proportions, as they gleamed through the trees, made the little dovecot of Matthias look woefully mean and shrunken. A footpath bordered his garden and ran beside the hedge; and at evening, when he strolled upon it with the post-prandial cigar, the Colonel's thoughts not infrequently turned to what the screen might hide. The white-walled mansion—for it was little less—seemed to stand apart from the ramshackle half-caste dwellings about it; and in the silence that wrapped it, and the seclusion of its leafy defences, it showed a reserve that was uncommon in chattering, gossiping, piebald Phulgarh. In India, where all the world lives with open doors, and where the most intimate confidences take place in the open veranda, this attitude could not but excite interest. Colonel Matthias might be a hermit, but he was mortal. Curiosity was born.

There was little to learn from gossip, and less from what the public eye could see. The owner of the house was a Mrs Black, the native widow of an English contractor who had amassed money and died in the land of his exile. The reason for the isolation which she maintained, and the zeal with which her property was guarded from ob-



servation, could only be surmised to exist in some chapter of her past career; to outward seeming her life was without present incident. She had two sons, one of whom, a weak-faced, delicate Eurasian, could occasionally be seen driving with his mother, or riding attended by a pair of heavily-armed sowars, in solitary dignity. Indeed, the constant care and observation expended by his mother and her servants upon this young man were among the details that piqued the Colonel's intelligence. Of the other son, beyond the fact of his existence, nothing was known.

Matthias's interest soon centred in Mrs Black. She drove out every afternoon amidst a clatter of retainers—plain Mrs Black might have been a Rani from the pomp and circumstance of her daily airing. She was a withered old woman, in native dress, and she was huddled into a bunch inside her clothes; but the face the Colonel saw was keenly alive, with restless black eyes that burnt like coals in their shrunken setting, and with all the traces of departed beauty. Matthias recognised by her features that she was not a down-country woman, but rather the daughter of some northern people—a princess, perhaps, of one of those turbulent races that swarm between the Empire and the outposts of the Czar. He gathered she was of noble birth from the manner in which she accepted service, and the obsequiousness with which her followers, her son included, proffered it. The contrast between the powerful face of the mother and the mild one of her son was remarkable; so, in a lesser degree, was the watchfulness and devotion with which she safeguarded him, and the timidity which, expressed in his every look and gesture, she appeared to foster by her jealous attitude. It seemed as if he were the object of far more than the ordinary solicitations which a widowed mother delights to shower upon her child, and which are, as a rule, removed by the growth of manhood and independence.

So much Matthias understood and conjectured. It was many months before the affairs of the white bungalow came to touch him more closely.

One evening, in the brief, incomparable afterglow of an Indian sunset, the Colonel, who had returned from tiger shooting in farther Timli, took his cheroot once more to the path beside the hedge. The air was balmy with the scent of the March roses, and a bulbul sang deliciously from the peach-tree against the house. Matthias, well fed and at peace with all mankind, wandered to and fro, and wondered as he paced whether the ways of Mrs Black and her mysterious *ménage* had altered in his absence.

His reverie was broken by a whisper—a murmur so gentle that at first he took it for the sighing of the bamboos, where their feathery crests swayed above his head. It was only when,

as if gathering strength in the twilight, it pronounced his name clearly to his ear that the Colonel paused to listen, and found the hidden speaker was beyond the hedge.

'Colonel Matthias! Colonel Matthias!'

'Yes!' said the Colonel, slanting his ear towards the bamboos. 'Who calls?'

'Hush,' said a woman's voice angrily. 'Not so loud.' There was a pause, and then: 'Do as I bid you, Colonel sahib. Bear with your full weight upon the hedge, thrusting the branches aside with your hands, and put your shoulder forward until you force an opening. Quick!'

The Colonel obeyed, wondering as he did so whether an intrigue were in contemplation, and if so, what imperious fair one could wish to force her uninvited company upon him. Then his pulses beat more quickly; the thought had flashed into his mind that he might be about to learn something of the riddle of his neighbour.

The hedge soon parted under his persuasion. A moment later he drew back quickly, for the figure of Mrs Black had pressed through from the other side, and stood, with glittering eyes fixed upon his face, at his elbow. She stepped on to the path, while the trees behind her snapped back into position.

The old woman was the first to recover herself from the shock of the encounter. She caught Matthias by the arm, lifting her withered face with sharp, bird-like glances to left and right, and pointed towards a summer-house that stood in the most secluded corner of the little garden.

'We are not likely to be observed there, I think,' she said in liquid Hindustani, through which the Colonel recognised a northern accent. 'You must forgive this strange proceeding, Colonel sahib. It is a matter of life and death. . . . Come.'

She darted to the summer-house, her white draperies sweeping swiftly over the open space that intervened, and dragging the Colonel in their wake in a mood of much bewilderment. There was something masterful in her manner, something against which he could not expostulate.

'I am glad I took this step,' said Mrs Black, seating herself in a dusky corner, and motioning to her companion to take his seat beside her. 'I am glad, because I have much knowledge of men, and I see in your eyes that you are to be trusted. It is well, for I come to open my confidence to you, and to beg your help against the great peril that encompasses my house.'

'If it is anything in which I can be of service'—began the Colonel. He saw her fevered eyes, and the deep lines that something besides age had cut in her face; and, having an inkling of what dark places might be in an Indian life, he was ready to pity the old woman—though, as he noticed, the initiative and the habit of command in which she indulged were not attitudes that made for compassion.

'It is,' interrupted Mrs Black quickly. 'You need not question that, Colonel sahib. I have not done this act without learning many things concerning you—things of which it would perhaps surprise you to know that any other person had knowledge. I know that you are secret, that you trust no woman with your mind, and that you are brave and generous. Will you listen to me now, for the hour grows late, and I may be missed?'

Colonel Matthias nodded. He was, as perhaps the old woman had foreseen, a little overcome by the preamble.

'Hear me, then.' Her fingers played with the gleaming jewels upon her wrists and clothing; her eyes were fixed upon the shadows that were creeping out of the evening.

'I am the daughter of a great Khan, who has reigned behind the mountains—there.' She dropped her bangles and pointed to where the pole-star hung above the Himalayas. 'He was the master of thousands of armed men who swarmed among the passes, and I, too, should have been their mistress when the time came, for I was his only child. But I was young—and beautiful—and the Englishman came: the first white man I had ever seen. They were about to marry me to my father's cousin, an old, evil man with a red-dyed beard, and with eyes as foul as a vulture's. I hated him. And the Englishman came: the first white man. . . . My father discovered it, and we fled, south and south again, pursued by his horsemen and his vengeance, until we were safe in India. There the Englishman married me, and so I am what you see—no Khan's daughter, but the white man's wife.

'It is not right for East and West to mate with each other. He thought only of amassing money; I was full of a great ambition, and I possessed that which, had he been ready to my wish, should have made him leader of my people. But he would not leave his money or risk a single hair. I could not go, for my father had laid a charge upon his people that they should kill me when I set foot beyond the border. That charge remains, and the tribesmen never forget.

'The years went by; we had two sons, and since my husband was no more than a *bammia*' (money-lender)—her lip curled—'I looked to them that they should succeed to my father's Khanate in place of their kinsman, Uzr Khan, who even now reaches out his hand and thinks he grasps it. Uzr Khan is a man—I grant it; but it is for my blood to hold the power he would usurp. So I looked to my sons.

'Nathoo was my first-born; and truly the powers of evil were present at his birth—dark-skinned child of Sheitan that he has always been. There is no wickedness that he does not know; there is no crime he would not commit; he

owns no authority but his own passions; and in chief his desire goes against his brother, Alan, since I named him as my heir, and drove the other, for his base actions, out of my gates. But Alan, though he is fair and amiable, is weak'— She broke off with a weary look, as if she were traversing old and well-worn ground.

'It is my will that Alan succeeds to my hopes, and it is my will that he shall sit upon the *gaddi* even as his grandfather before him. But there are many dangers in the way, and of these the greatest lies in the hatred of Nathoo. And now, Colonel sahib, listen intently, for I am about to tell you more than any one in India, outside my own people, could hope to learn.

'There exists a sacred vessel, the possession of which ensures to him who has the courage to plant himself upon the throne the leadership of my people in perpetuity for himself and his heirs. No one among the tribesmen but would acknowledge the man who, gaining my father's capital with the talisman in his hand, should hold it firmly and draw his sword to defend it and himself. It is sacred, Colonel sahib, to all my people; and not alone because it is the sign of authority, but because it holds a power that is wonderful, and beyond the understanding of men. When I fled from my father's kingdom I carried it—was it not my right?—and to this day Uzr sits upon the throne in fear, because he knows that when the one to whom I shall give it comes, Uzr Khan will be the Khan no longer. And it is Alan for whom it is destined—Alan who, when once the present danger is passed, shall ride to take his own, and sit in the seat of his forefathers!'

She sprang to her feet and swept on in a torrent of eager speech.

'Nathoo stands in the path; and in that I am an old woman and he is cunning and strong, I fear that he will do harm to his brother unless Alan is always in my care and in my sight. The road to the kingdom waits for the hoofs of the Khan's horse; and meanwhile danger bars the way. The house is full of eyes. I see Nathoo's wickedness everywhere, corrupting my servants, striving by craft and intrigue and subtlety to win possession of the sacred thing; threatening always the life of Alan, and the security of the trust I hold for him. . . . It warns me—ah! it warns me; but where is the use of warning to the eyes that are dim and to the brain that is feeble?'

'What is "it"?' asked the Colonel.

Mrs Black shrank back into the deeper shadows of the summer-house, and drew something out of the folds of her dress. She handed it to the Colonel with trembling fingers.

'It is here,' she said. 'Now do you understand my action? I know that Nathoo is near; that the danger threatens; and I come to you,

Colonel sahib, because you are a man to trust and to honour, to ask you to hold it in safe keeping in your strong hands until to-night—for I fear to-night—is over, and I come again to claim it.'

Colonel Matthias took it from her and looked. It was an old, battered silver lotah—a miniature of the drinking-vessel that is one of the commonest objects in India—very old, evidently, and studded sparsely with some dull, uncut rubies. It had an inscription chased upon it; and this the Colonel found to be in Persian, and read aloud:

*'To see is to have power! Look, then, O King, and be warned.'*

*'Will you keep it for me?'*

*'But—but this is a treasure of antiquity, and I can see that it might well be a thing beyond price to those to whom it belongs. What a find for a curio-hunter! . . . How do you know that I am to be trusted with it?'*

The old woman rose from her seat in the shadow. She caught Matthias's hands and pressed them tightly over the silver vase as she answered:

*"To see is to have power!"* she quoted. *'It*

*is enough for you, Colonel sahib, that I do know. You would not, perhaps, listen to me if I were to tell you how I get my knowledge. You would not understand, any more than you understand why I have thrust myself upon you to-night, or why I dread the dark hours that are coming upon me even now. Guard the silver lotah, Colonel sahib, as you would guard your own honour; and believe that I do not forget the man who helps me. And now—I go.'*

The moon was beginning to creep above the night haze and the rose-hedges. The glimmer of its great yellow disk dazzled the Colonel's eyes as he turned to follow the old woman's sudden flight from the garden. She was gone before he had time to recover his sight. The rustle of her dress died away beyond the bamboos as they sprang behind her into their leafy wall, and only the distant voice of the city clamoured to the moonlight.

Colonel Matthias listened for a little while as if he thought that the woman might return; and then he walked slowly back to the bungalow, with sidelong glances at the shadows about him, and with his protecting hands encircling the silver lotah.

## CUBA AS A FIELD FOR EMIGRATION.



THE magnificent development of Greater Britain during the last half of the present century has done much towards the consolidation of imperial power and prestige—that is, mere dominion has grown into empire, the outlying possessions of Great Britain's political yesterday being integral parts of the British Empire of to-day. This is all very grand in its way, but it calls to mind the homely old proverb that 'You cannot eat your pudding and have it too;' for the rapid development of our overseas dominions means the practical spoiling of them as fields for emigration, at any rate to anything like the extent that they were during the eighteenth century and the earlier decades of the nineteenth.

Of course Africa remains to us, with its future still before it. 'From the Cape to Cairo' is the shibboleth of British *fin de siècle* colonisation. But there we have an outlet for the future rather than the immediate present. To a large extent, Africa as a field for emigration in the ordinary sense of the term is potential rather than positive. To be explicit, at present it is a field for the energies of empire-builders rather than of mere everyday homestead-makers; the conditions require that one should be a pioneer first and a settler or colonist after. As a general proposition, the same applies to Borneo and New Guinea; and the average young Englishman or Scotsman,

with a few hundred pounds in his pocket and a superabundance of energy for the exercise of which there is no opportunity at home, is for the most part looking for some place that combines the advantages of, at least, partially settled social and political conditions, with those of material newness, where in reasonable peace and security he can build up a home for himself.

Of foreign countries—if we except China and the Far East—Chili holds out the most alluring prospects to the European emigrant. As a matter of fact, a number of Scotch colonies have been planted there. But whilst it would be impossible to overestimate the natural advantages of the great and progressive Pacific state as a field for European emigration, serious disadvantages are to be noted. The government is doubtless the most settled on the continent south of the Rio Grande; but this is offset by the brigandage and general lawlessness that prevail in the interior, whither colonists are invited. Magnify by a thousandfold the predial larceny that does so much to restrict agricultural industry in our own West Indian colony of Jamaica, add the elements of instinctive, unreasoning cupidity and wanton bloodthirstiness, and we have some conception of the conditions that militate against the otherwise matchless attractions of Chili.

But so narrow is this old world of ours now growing that, having said this, it is scarcely an



exaggeration to add that we have reviewed the general possibilities of emigration. Therefore, even the limited advantages that the great West Indian island of Cuba offers become worthy of attention; for, whilst under Spanish dominion the island was jealously guarded as a mere estate of the Crown, under American dominion or auspices—whatever the ultimate political arrangement may be—it is to all practical intents and purposes thrown open to the influx of capital and enterprise from all quarters. It is unfortunate that, under the circumstances, there are not greater openings for emigration. However, such as do exist are, for the reasons above set forth, worth the consideration which it is here proposed to give them.

The first part of the subject to claim our attention is the general condition of the island at present. The reversion of Cuba, after four centuries of European colonisation, to the status of a field for industrial settlement requires some notice. The explanation lies in the one word of portentous omen—war. Discussing the ethics of war in an article contributed to one of the leading American magazines, General H. M. Bengough, late Commander of the Forces in Jamaica, says: 'Those who admit most fully the horrors of war, the fierce passions it arouses, the devastation and misery that follow in its train, are those who have witnessed the gruesome sights of a battlefield after the battle, the fierce fight in the breach of a besieged town, the murderous slaughter in pursuit.' As a veteran soldier's view this is not bad, but it is too restricted. To catch the proper perspective of the horrors of war one needs to contemplate such a picture of desolation as that which Cuba now presents after thirty years of spasmodic warfare, terminating in three years of fierce conflict, during which the destruction of natural resources seems to have been the chief immediate objective of both sides.

As we are not discussing the abstract question, but merely its immediate bearing on our subject, it will be sufficient in this connection to quote the salient features of Cuba's condition as they are succinctly presented by Commissioner R. P. Porter in his official report to the United States Government. They are these: 'Population depleted, agriculture prostrate, industry destroyed, commerce devastated;' and for its rehabilitation the same authority suggests as a primary necessity 'that trinity of civilisation to dot the island—the home, the schoolhouse, and the church.' The lack of these great elements, he says, is the cause underlying all Cuba's ills. It is the primary object of the American administration to supply these wants, and begin at once the work of economic or industrial reconstruction, to do which immigration is one of the first necessities. This it is, briefly put, which renders Cuba to-day an attractive field for European emigrants possessing the essential equipment of intelligence, enterprise, and initial financial means.

Cuba possesses in a high degree the two fundamental bases of economic prosperity. In the first place, it is one of the most richly endowed countries in the world in natural resources. In the next place, it is within a short distance of the best and most profitable markets in the world. Yet under Spanish rule, with an area of over 42,000 square miles, or 28,000,000 acres, its splendid opportunities were but very partially utilised. According to the last census, in 1887, the entire population numbered but 1,521,684, of whom 1,032,435 were whites and the rest coloured. For this area and population the Spanish official statistics show that there were, before the war, 37,702 sugar, tobacco, and coffee plantations, farms, and cattle ranches, which were roughly valued at a little over £6,500,000. In 1862, six years before the first outbreak of the revolutionary struggle, Cabrera, a private authority, accounted for nearly twice as many, classifying them as follows: sugar plantations, 1528; tobacco, 11,541; coffee, 782; cotton, 35; cocoa, 18; cattle ranches, 6175; bee farms, 1731; stock farms, 2712; truck farms, 11,738; and produce farms, 27,748.

At the best, Cuban statistics are unreliable; but these figures may be taken as approximately correct. It is known that from time to time the population has fluctuated, showing remarkable decreases alternating with normal increases. At any rate, accepting the official figures, which indicate that before the late war the population numbered 1,500,000, and that there were altogether under 38,000 industrial enterprises, besides the native manufactures and mining concerns, we get a fair conception of the comparatively low degree of development reached under the repressive rule of Spain.

The native manufactures were limited to sugar and tobacco. As regards the former, it need here only be mentioned that the 2,000,000 acres of land under cane cultivation produced at the maximum output just one-half the entire cane-sugar product of the world, which indicates the latent possibilities of wealth in that direction when the normal conditions of the sugar-market shall have been restored, and the millions of Cuban acres not yet touched by the plough are utilised. Tobacco is the second leading industry in value, although occupying only a small area outside the great tobacco district of Pinar del Rio province. Previous to the war this province had a population of 36,000, and produced upwards of 65,000 bales of leaf, from which the world-famous Havana cigars were made. To-day the population is under 6000, and the tobacco produced averages under 6000 bales. The production of cigars being the island's chief manufacture next to sugar, the most striking illustration of the *débâcle* of the war is to be found here. In 1889 the cigar output of the Havana *fabricas* was 300,000,000, valued at £2,700,000. In 1897, when the war was at its height, but before it had completed its

fell work of destruction, the output had dwindled to 123,000,000. The condition of the Pinar del Rio tobacco industry, as indicated by those figures, fairly represents the general industrial condition of the island, and fully justifies Commissioner Porter's sweeping summary, as above quoted.

But whilst exact in his presentment of the actual state to which Cuba has been reduced, and uncompromising in his denunciations of Spanish misrule, the Commissioner is fully impressed with the possibilities that lie before the island; and this it is that particularly interests us at present. He points out that the natural resources of Cuba are abundant to support a population of 10,000,000, while the estimated present population is under 1,000,000, some authorities placing it as low as 800,000. The project—if one will, the problem—before the Americans is, to begin at once the work of economic or industrial reconstruction; and in this connection the Commissioner appositely argues that 'there need be no opposition nor rivalry of different interests, as the strong and important industries, mostly agricultural, are of such a nature as to thrive at the same time.' Another important fact is, that 'the productive energy of Cuba and the fertility of the soil are so great that the process of accumulating capital will become rapid once the results of the war are over and a stable government is established. The rehabilitation may be slow for the people of Cuba, but by cordial co-operation it will be certain and permanent.' It is nevertheless acknowledged that the utter destruction and disorganisation brought about by the war 'will make the work of placing the island in a favourable economic condition costly and protracted, and many years must elapse before Cuba will take its rightful place in the economies of the world.'

Such are, in brief, the general conditions of the country that is now inviting to its shores the best elements of British as well as American emigration to revive and develop its great industries of sugar, tobacco, coffee, fruit, minerals, woods, and cattle; the value of at least the two first of these we have given.

The work of rehabilitation has been already commenced in earnest, and under what appear to be exceptional auspices. It is noted that since the war English capitalists have invested heavily in railways and other deals aggregating up to the present time over £13,000,000 in properties said to be intrinsically worth double the purchase-money. As an example of this, the representative of a large English syndicate has recently purchased thirty square miles in Pinar del Rio containing iron-mines. It is said that English capital is coming into Cuba in larger quantities than American, and now as a result it is common talk in Havana that 'the English are picking up all the best things going.'

It is to the small individual capitalist, however—himself a settler and home-maker—that Cuba

is looking for its industrial redemption; and here is the opportunity for the emigrant from the British Isles. It is the recognition of this fact that has given rise to the several American colonisation schemes that are on foot. As an example of these may be cited the Cuban Land and Steamship Company, the object of which is to encourage emigration of settlers. It is advertising to provide homes for settlers on an extensive tract of territory which has been acquired in the neighbourhood of Nuevitas, on the north coast, in the province of Puerto Principe. The natural resources are among the finest in Cuba, and the situation is commanding as regards the important condition of accessibility. The company proposes giving out the lands to colonists in lots of from three to forty acres. With such advantages offering, settlers of the most desirable type will doubtless be found in numbers when the conditions are made clear. The danger is, rather, that the American 'boom' system may supervene after a while.

Cuba, however, needs just as much another class of immigrant, which it is not so easy to procure. This is the wage-labourer, without whom no industry can be prosecuted. In his 'primary means suggested for reconstruction' Commissioner Porter mentions first the promotion of emigration of labourers, especially white Canary Islanders, for the tobacco plantations; secondary consideration being given to even the importation of cattle to replace the herds that were literally exterminated to feed the contending armies during the three years of active hostilities, and to the inducement of capital to come, from which the condition of the labour question in Cuba may be conjectured. But the crux of the question as presented does not lie in any inherent difficulty in supplying the labour-market, but with the American occupation itself. The half-starving negroes of the British West Indies would, under favourable inducements, be only too glad to emigrate to Cuba. Barbadoes alone might supply 200,000. The British negro, however, is wise in his generation, and prefers even the starvation of monarchical freedom to the long rope or swift bullet that are the salient characteristics of republican serfdom. So the Americans must seek some other solution of that problem. Probably between the Canary Islands and the Central and South American states a sufficient supply of labour emigration will be found.

Assuming this difficulty to be satisfactorily settled, we may return to our colonist immigrant. There are many openings for him, the choice of which would lie with the individual, and be determined by the factors of taste and means. As a general proposition it may be assumed that the majority would take up cane or tobacco cultivation. The latter is by far the more attractive as a calling, and remunerative as an

industry. But it requires more capital to start with, and as a primary essential of success the colonist would need the assistance of expert knowledge and experience. We cannot here enter into the details; but suffice it to say that it is a recognised fact that the successful cultivation of the finer grades of tobacco, from which alone large fortunes may be anticipated, is the result of a heaven-born instinct rather than an acquired art. It has been the unvarying experience of all foreigners engaging in Cuban tobacco cultivation that no length of experience could bring them success, but that at last as at first they were entirely dependent on the native experts.

The cane cultivator would, in any case, be more welcome, and would, moreover, receive ready encouragement and even direct assistance if needed from the great Sugar Centrals, where only, under the Cuban system, sugar is manufactured. The cultivation of the cane is carried on by planters on farms which are called locally *colonias*; the planters have nothing whatever to do with the manufacturing process, as they have under the British West Indian system, and can devote their attention and energies wholly to the production of the raw material. The result is seen in the pre-eminence of Cuban sugar. Thus, any one of average intelligence can take up the cultivation of cane successfully almost from the start.

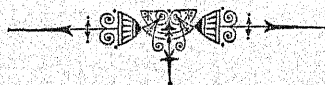
Coffee and fruit growing would be the more immediately obvious alternatives to the foregoing, and in all cases the general surrounding conditions would be similar. But for specific details the prospective emigrant should make all inquiries before taking the final steps to go to Cuba. It would be very unwise to go without first having something like a clear idea of what he is going to do, and how he is to set about doing it.

Apart from the agricultural industries, there will be room in Cuba for immigrants of the artisan class of all sorts and conditions. In this connection it is, however, important to note what the American Commissioner has said on the subject. In his report occurs the following significant passage: 'There is little hope for industrial enterprise in the broader sense until the sanitary conditions are improved in the industrial centres. Yellow fever makes it dangerous for the unacclimatised, and the initiatory success of manufacturing depends on European and American skilled labour. This is a matter of prime interest to those looking towards Cuba with the idea of residence or investment, but is having special attention from the American authorities as being of paramount use.' Clearly, until these conditions have been radically altered—and much in that

direction has been accomplished during the past year—intending emigrants to Cuba should take care to avoid the cities.

Ever since the American occupation the newspapers have from time to time published more or less sensational accounts of the alleged popular discontent, the possibilities of troubles arising between the Cubans and Americans, and finally that brigandage is rampant throughout the country and is sure to spread and become an institution to an even greater extent than was the case during the Spanish domination. The truth is that there is little or nothing to be apprehended from these quarters. When not mere canards, the reports were grossly exaggerated. Before evacuating, the Spaniards perpetrated a sort of universal 'jail delivery,' and let loose for their conquerors the criminal accumulations of years. These people certainly need looking after, and they have been giving some trouble; but the Cubans as a whole are peaceable and industriously disposed, and desire nothing more earnestly than to secure permanent peace and prosperity for their war-wrecked country. This the overwhelming majority of them believe that the Americans can and will give them. It has also been sought by the sensationalists to make capital out of that indigenous West Indian *bête noir*, the colour question. If it ever existed in Cuba as a live issue, it has been practically obliterated by the conditions of the war since its first commencement in 1863. On the innumerable battlefields that were the stones in the fabric of Cuban independence, white, coloured, and black Cubans fought and bled together as brothers in arms for one common heroic purpose. In the mountain camp, in the forest retreat, on the dreary march, ill-clad and half-starved, it was the same thing. It is not in nature that the personal prejudice could survive that sort of thing; and as a matter of fact the best Cuban intelligence is unanimously of opinion that the question cannot possibly arise as a disturbing issue even under the impulse of the notorious antipathy of the Americans to the coloured race.

Be this as it may, the political future of Cuba may be taken as being fully assured; and we need go no farther than the neighbouring island of Jamaica to find a striking object-lesson of the possibilities of good government in this direction. There the colour question has been reduced to a purely academic one, albeit the blacks are in the preponderance of 600,000 to 14,000 whites. In Cuba, as we have seen, the coloured element was less than one-third of the population in 1887.





## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

By JOHN OXENHAM.

## CHAPTER XXI.



AS I drew near, however, a faint sound of music caught my ear, and leaving the front of the house, I went quietly along to the front terrace. The music was louder here, and the darkness was ribbed with narrow bars of light which streamed through the venetian shutters of the drawing-room, and across the yellow bars the rain fell like drops of liquid silver.

I stole close up, and smiled, in spite of my anxious mind, at sight of Hortense, whom I could only see in sections like parts of a child's puzzle, strumming away with the painful pertinacity of a beginner at *Partant pour la Syrie*.

The poor old piano jangled and quavered under the torture, and I pitied it, remembering the slim white fingers slipping delicately over it the last time I heard it played.

Then I stole away and struck across the grass and through the dripping woods straight for Vaurel's house, and the only sound was the dismal plashing of the weir. I struck the path above the house and stepped cautiously downwards, for the wet leaves on the damp soil were slippery.

The little house was all dark, and there was no sound from it, but my nose caught a faint fragrant whiff of wood smoke which doubtless the rain bore down. I turned the corner cautiously, and in an instant, with nothing more than a preliminary snuffle, a pair of fiercely scrabbling paws were clawing their way up my chest, and a great blunt muzzle was working with eager snorts to fasten on to my throat.

'Boulot!' I gasped; and he dropped like a sack and grovelled abjectly at my feet, too much ashamed of himself even to greet me.

I bent and patted him, and he recovered sufficiently to rear himself up against the door to carry the good news to his master.

'*Holla!*' cried Vaurel from inside. 'Who is that?'

'It is I, Vaurel—Lamont.'

'Lamont!' and I heard the bed creak as he sprang up—'at last!'

He unbolted the door, and as I entered thrust a piece of paper among the ashes and lighted a candle.

'I began to think you had got drowned, monsieur; but I am mighty glad to see you.'

'We got blown out to sea in the gale, and only got back to St Nazaire to-day. I came on at once. Where is —?'

'He's all right. He's under there,' pointing with his foot to the other bed. 'But I've been

living on a powder magazine ever since I got back. No one knows I'm here but Louis Vard, and I'm aching to get away. When can we go, monsieur?'

'Now—at once; the sooner the better. The ship will be off the river-mouth by six o'clock. Where's the boat?'

'Sunk in the river where it was before. I had the devil's own job getting back without being seen.'

'I'm sure of it, Vaurel. I'm thankful to find you safe here, and him still with you. I've been fancying all kinds of things happening to you both.'

'Well, they very nearly did, all of them; but I'll tell you later. We must get to work at once, and, as you say, monsieur, the sooner we're away the better.'

'Well, what's to be done first?'

'We'll have to carry him through the woods to the boat. We can empty her when we get there, then in and away. It'll be pretty damp, but we can't help that.'

'It's damp anyhow. Have you any things to take with you?'

'They're all ready,' he said, kicking an old carpet-bag.

'How will we carry him?'

'Stretcher, as we did the other.'

He got a couple of long poles, of which there were always a number lying about outside, draped a blanket between them, secured it with half-a-dozen nails, and laid a dozen empty sacks on the top.

'We had the detectives round the very night I left,' he said as he worked; 'they nosed all over the Château and all round here. Good thing we were away, and that I'd left everything straight and clean up yonder; and, better still, they'd gone before I got back. Getting back *was* a fearful time!'

When we were ready Vaurel hauled Lepard out from under the bed, all ready trussed and gagged, and we placed him on the litter. Vaurel placed the carpet-bag under his knees and stamped out the handful of smouldering ashes. We then took up the poles, Vaurel slinging his in the loops of a rope round his neck, and passed out into the night.

He closed and locked the door, and we turned up the slippery path.

We had not gone a dozen yards, however, Boulot sneezing disgustedly at our heels, and still somewhat ashamed of himself for making such a mistake, when a voice just above us in the darkness said, '*Holla, messieurs!* and what have you got there?'

Lepard came to the ground with a bump as Vaurel loosed one end of his sling and dashed upwards at the speaker, and in a moment the two of them were rolling over and over among the wet leaves and bushes.

'Tie your handkerchief over his mouth,' panted Vaurel.

He was lying on the top of the other by this time, squeezing all the breath he could out of him. I tied a couple of knots in my handkerchief and held the stranger's wriggling head between my knees, but his mouth was closed tight and I could not get the gag in. Vaurel raised himself and came down on him with a plump which made him gasp. I slipped the gag in and tied it tight behind his neck.

'Now his feet,' panted Vaurel.

I got the rope he had been using for the litter and tied the man's feet.

'To the house,' said Vaurel, and we each took an arm and dragged him down the path, his bound heels making a big furrow in the soft earth.

Vaurel unlocked the door again, sought out some more rope, and we lashed him up like a mummy, laid him on the bed and locked him in, and then turned back up the path to our original enterprise.

'What will become of him, and who is he?' I said as we replaced Lepard and the sacks on the litter.

'Some dirty detective, I suppose,' said Vaurel; 'not a Cour-des-Comptes man, anyhow. I've thought several times some one was about. That's why I left Boulot outside. I thought at first it was Juliot. Glad it wasn't. We might get into trouble for handling a gendarme like that. We can say we thought this pig was a burglar.'

'And what will become of him?'

'Louis Vard may come down in a day or two. He brought me victuals twice this week; but it has been short commons, as he couldn't come often for fear of being seen.'

'If we get down the river all right we might send Louis a telegram from Redon or St Nazaire telling him to go to your house.'

'We can do that. For myself, I should let him starve a bit. Now, monsieur, there's the big house right before us. We bear round to the right, and the boat is in the little bend where it was before.'

We felt our way along the river-bank, stumbling and sprawling.

'It should be somewhere about here,' said Vaurel, and tripped over the rope and went headlong, letting the prisoner down once more with a bump.

'*Sacré nom-de-chien!*' he growled, 'there you are! *Eh, bien!* better so than not at all. Now, monsieur, help me to haul her in, and we'll get the water out of her.'

We drew the boat in by the rope as far as we could, and then waded out and hauled her up the sedgy bank, inch by inch, with the water running out astern, till I was able to get into her and bale her with my two hands, splashing out the water in sheets. Then we hauled her ashore, turned her over on her side, and let her drain.

'Any oars?' I asked.

'Lashed under the thwarts.'

In another ten minutes we were running down the river in mid-stream, both of us soaked to the skin, and in the best of spirits at the prosperous start we had made. Lepard lay in the bottom of the boat carefully covered with the blanket and empty sacks. Boulot sat on the top of the sacks and shivered abjectly at the proximity of the hated water, and when the dawn came I saw his eyes rolling in horror on finding how very near it was.

We spoke little on the journey, but once Vaurel sprang up with a big oath and a sounding slap of his hand against his leg.

'*Sapristi! sacristi! sacré nom-de-chien!*' he said. 'I've left the carpet-bag behind with all my things;' and he looked half-inclined to get out and go back.

'Too late now, my friend. Louis Vard will find them and take care of them, and we'll buy all you want at St Nazaire.'

'It was that stupid fool coming and interfering,' he said, and relapsed into gloomy silence over his loss.

We passed several villages lying back from the river-bank; but the inhabitants were all fast asleep, and no one troubled us. I took the sculls for the sake of the exercise and warmth, and it was just five o'clock when we caught the first swell of the sea; a quarter of an hour later we were past the outreaching arms of the land, and as the *Clutha* came stealing round a point to the south we headed straight for her.

#### CHAPTER XXII.—OVER THE SEAS.



As the blunt nose of our boat rubbed gently up against the schooner's shining side, the sailors gazed down wondering at this strange carry-on, and evidently could make neither head nor tail of it.

The Colonel was quickly hoisted in and carried down to Macpherson's cabin. He was looking very much the worse for wear, and his eyes gleamed hatred and malice and cursed us with the curses which he would not allow his lips to utter. But the morning sun caused them to blink, which somewhat weakened the effect. Denise had retired to the saloon as soon as she saw that our voyage had been prosperous, and there she awaited us.

The Château boat was turned adrift and the schooner's nose pointed out to sea, and then I said to Vaurel:

'We'll both be the better of a change of clothes and something to eat and drink. Come down below, my friend, and I'll see how I can fit you out.'

Boulot lumbered down the companion in front of us, and from his excited snuffles I knew that he was paying his respects to Denise.

She stood waiting for us in the saloon, and came forward and kissed me warmly on both cheeks; she then turned to greet Vaurel with welcoming hands, her face alight with pleasure at the sight of him.

He stopped short in wide-eyed astonishment.

'*Comment*—ma'm'selle!' he gasped.

'But yes, Prudent, it is really me.'

He looked from one to the other of us, not understanding.

'But no longer ma'm'selle, my friend,' I said. 'Permit me to introduce you to my wife. Madame Lamont, this is Monsieur Prudent Vaurel, the most faithful and best of friends.'

'And I knew him before I had ever set eyes on you, my husband,' she said merrily, and wrung his big hand in both hers.

'Ah!' he said, still slightly dazed with surprise. 'And you never said a word of it, monsieur. Well, I could not have wished anything better for ma'm'selle.—He is a true man, ma'm'selle, and a brave one.'

'*Merci!*' we said together, and laughed at our unanimity.

'Monsieur has made very good use of his time,' said Vaurel slyly.

'I am quite of that opinion, my friend,' I said; 'and now let us to table, and you'll give us all your news.'

He was somewhat shy at first on sitting down to table with 'ma'm'selle,' but Denise very soon put him at his ease.

'We did not get away a minute too soon that first time, monsieur,' he said. 'There was a strange man came to the village that same night, and Louis Vard swore he was a detective. He nosed round everywhere and questioned every one, and next day he insisted on going over the Château, but he found nothing for all his nose was so sharp. They are hunting for Lepard high and low, I expect, and I should not be a bit surprised if the whole thing comes out without our doing another thing. It all depends on what his papers show, and if they can lay hands on them. When they can't find him they'll hunt for the papers, and if they are to be found, pft!' and he snapped his fingers to show what value he put on the Colonel if his papers were discovered and proved incriminatory.

'And where are we going now, monsieur?' he asked.

'We are going to St Nazaire first to send off

a telegram to Louis Vard and get you some clothes, and then we sail for New Caledonia, Prudent.'

'*Bien!*' he said. 'Boulot and I will go too. I have always thought I should like to go—as a visitor.—What do you say, my little Boulot?'

Boulot sneezed a hearty assent, and graciously accepted from Denise's fingers the thigh-bone of a fowl, which he bolted at two crunches, and then wrinkled up his brows, licked his lips, and blinked plaintively for more—plenty more—of the same kind. At the same time he glanced sheepishly at me out of the corners of his eyes, as much as to say, 'Say, old fellow, don't you go and give me away. It was a silly mistake to make, I confess; but, you see, it was dark and I'd been asleep, and it won't occur again.'

'I cleaned out the prisoner's cell before I left,' said Vaurel. 'I had asked Louis Vard to come down and give me a hand, and he nearly had a fit when he saw the Colonel; but when I explained matters to him he wanted to twist his neck. We tied him up, gagged him, and put him on a couch in the salon, with Boulot to look after him; then we set to work and straightened matters up all round, and left everything nice and tidy. But what a job it was getting back up that river! Coming down was easy enough, but going back against the stream—it was killing work. I waited in the bay here all day, hoping every minute to see you, and we had a pretty bad time of it, for it was rough here too. When it got dark I sculled back into the mouth of the river and as far up as I could get; then I went ashore, tied a rope round my waist, and towed the boat along. It was pretty rough travelling, I can tell you, for me at all events. For the Colonel it was easy enough. He went along like a prince and I his galley-slave. However, I swore a good deal, and received some bread at a cottage near the river, and we got on bit by bit. At places where there were bends and back-currents I could scull a bit, but it was mostly towing, and it took me till the next night to get in sight of the Château again. Then I had to hide the boat and leave Boulot in charge while I got Louis Vard to help. I lay in wait for him as he came home from the station, and we carried the Colonel up to my house. *Voilà tout!*'

'Ma'm'selle!—madame, I mean,' he broke out again, beaming all over his face, 'but it does my eyes good to see you looking so well and happy.'

'There is only one thing I want, Prudent, to make me perfectly happy, and that is'—

'Monsieur Gaston,' he broke in; 'and you shall have him, ma'm'selle. You shall have him back as sure as I sit here.'

We put in to St Nazaire as being the safer place from which to telegraph to Louis Vard, but only stopped there long enough for Vaurel and myself to go ashore and send off the telegram and buy such things as Vaurel needed; then



we turned the *Clutha's* nose to the west and felt our voyage fairly begun.

During the morning I paid a visit to the Colonel. He had been freed from his bonds, and was lying in his bunk very unhappy at the motion of the vessel; for we were crossing the Bay of Biscay, and the *Clutha* was showing us what she could do under the circumstances.

'Colonel Lepard,' I said, 'I have come to offer you one last chance. We are bound for New Caledonia to procure the release of Gaston des Comptes. There is still time for you to put us in possession of all the facts of the case. If you do so I will put you ashore—as soon as I have found them correct—in Spain or England, or on the African coast. If you won't speak you go with us, and we shall deal with you as seems best to us.'

I waited, but he would not speak. His back was towards me, and I saw him shudder as the yacht gave a sickening roll.

'Very well, then, you must take the consequences,' I said, and left him to his agonies.

The waves of Biscay played havoc with our new arrivals. Vaurel was turned many times inside out, and expressed new and voluble surprise on each occasion, but presently found his legs and took a new lease of life. Boulot curled himself into a tight coil in a corner of the saloon, and refused all offers of food, declining even to be spoken to till his stomach had adjusted itself to the motion of the ship. Then he got up, balanced himself tentatively on his bandy-legs, with his chin almost on the floor, tottered up on deck, sneezed many times at the nip of the keen salt air, and growled out a curse whenever a white-top came lashing over on to the deck. Then he went downstairs again and gently intimated to the steward that he was hungry, and that in default of legitimate satisfaction of his wants he would help himself, looking meaningly at the calves of the steward's trousers. Then when he had fared sumptuously he went on deck again and was immediately very sick, but after that he felt better.

#### CHAPTER XXIII.—HALF ROUND THE WORLD.



NCE out of the troublesome Bay we slipped rapidly down the Spanish coast and caught the North-east Trades soon after passing Teneriffe. Then we shut off steam and hoisted our wings, and found the *Clutha's* flight before the wind more to the liking of some of our passengers than her steaming had been.

Denise was by this time a seasoned sailor, and never had man a more delightful companion; and Vaurel and Boulot, as soon as they had found their sea-legs, took life very comfortably. It took Vaurel, indeed, many days to overcome his shyness at associating so intimately with the

lady of the Château; but this wore off by degrees before 'ma'm'selle's' grateful appreciation of all he had done for her and her house, and he settled down to the position of cabin passenger with considerable enjoyment.

Each day I visited the Colonel, but never once got a word from him. Even when he thought he was at the point of death from sea-sickness, the black jaw bristled with defiance and the heavy shoulders humped themselves sulkily against me. And I must confess that as the days passed I came to have something akin to a lurking admiration for this dogged steadfastness of purpose which kept the door tight locked upon him when a dozen words would have set him free. I wished most devoutly that his stubborn pride would give way and let him speak, so that we might release him to dree his weird as Providence might permit, for his being there was as bad as having a corpse on board, and our thoughts could never get far away from him. The confinement on shore and his sufferings at sea had told on him strongly, but he showed a spirit worthy of a better man and a better cause.

At first the discussions of the men as to who the Colonel was and why he was thus kept prisoner were endless, and it seemed to me advisable at last to put a stop to all the talk by telling them the simple truth.

I was pacing the deck one night after Denise had gone to bed, when, as I passed the forward companion which led to the men's quarters, a lively disputation on the subject of the Colonel caught my ear.

'He's the gal's father, I tell you,' said one gruff voice, 'and he wouldn't say yes, so they've tuk 'im along.'

'Her husband, maybe,' suggested another.

'Not a bit of it,' said the first. 'Mr Lamont's a gentleman, and he don't run away with no other man's wife, you bet. Why, it was him as got all that money for fishin' out a Yankee millionaire what tumbled overboard from the Cunarder. You remember—don't you? There was a lot o' talk about it at the time. My eyes! I wish I'd had the chance. Some folks has luck. He was first officer on the *Servia*, and 'ere 'e is a-sailin' 'is own yacht and takin' along the handsomest girl ever I set eyes on. It's her father, you bet; and he wouldn't say yes, so they've just tuk 'im along.'

'Are they right married?' asked another.

'In course they are. Why, you was there on the West Indi'man, and seed it all with your own eyes. And a bonny sight she was too. I never seed anything prettier in this world yet.'

'It may be all right what you're a-tellin' us, Jim Barrett; but you're on'y supposin' it. You don't know any more than the rest of us.'

'Oh, all right; if you know better'—

'I'm not sayin', mind you, but what you say may be right; but what I says is that you don't

know for sure any more than the rest of us. Anyhow, it's a darned rummy start to bring a man aboard like that, and keep him locked up in his cabin, and never let no one see him 'cept that 'airy Frenchman and the boss.'

'Well, you'll find out I'm right. He's Mrs Lamont's father, and he'd shut 'er up in a convent, so's Mr Lamont couldn't get at 'er. Then Mr Lamont he 'ooks 'er out o' the convent and marries 'er out of hand; and the old man wouldn't say yes, so they've brung 'im along; and they'll keep 'im tight till 'e does say yes, and then they'll let 'im go.'

'What's it matter 'im not sayin' yes, so long's they're married straight and proper?' said another.

'Ah, that's just where it is. In France you can't git married proper unless yer father and yer mother says yes; and so when the old man'—

'But they was married on the West Indi'man, you said. Bein' married on a West Indi'man ain't bein' married in France.'

'Silly! the gal's French—ain't she? And she couldn't git married proper unless her father said yes; and so they're holdin' 'im tight till he says it, then off he goes, and mercy bang and au revore.'

'Ah! I thought as how they weren't married proper,' said the former 'doubting Thomas.'

'Well, they will be as soon as the old man says the word; and, anyhow, it's his fault, not theirs.'

'What I says,' said another, 'is—has the cap'n of a ship the right to marry people right?'

'Better arsk 'im next time you're on one.'

'Course he has,' said Jim. 'He's the right to string you up—hasn't he? And he's the right to bury you—hasn't he? Well then, it stands to reason he's the right to marry you too if he wants to.'

'I don't know,' said persevering Thomas. 'Stringin' up and buryin' of a man—why, that makes an end of 'im; but marryin' of a man's different, and may lead to consequences'—

'There's many a man'd ha' bin glad if he'd bin strung up and buried afore he got married,' growled another, who had evidently had experiences.

Next day I caught our young friend Barrett alone, and asked him, 'What do the men think of our friend down below, Jim?'

'Who's that, sir?' he asked, colouring up.

'The Frenchman we keep locked up in Mr Macpherson's cabin.'

'Aw—um. Well, sir,' he said, shuffling about uneasily, 'they do say he's Mrs Lamont's father.'

'Dear me! And why do they suppose we treat him in that way?'

'Well, sir'—and he looked round both sides of me, but I stood square in front and left him no means of escape—'they do say, sir, that the old gentleman won't say yes to your marryin' the young lady, and you're agoin' to keep him tight till he does.'

I laughed out, which disconcerted him greatly.

'Well, now, Jim, I'm going to tell you the actual facts. It's no good having a mystery when there's no need for it. The man down below is a French officer. By fraud and trickery he caused Mrs Lamont's only brother to be transported to New Caledonia for treason and betrayal of War Office secrets. We know the facts, but cannot get hold of the proofs except through this man. Each day I have offered him his liberty if he will tell what he knows, but so far he will not speak. Until he does I hold him prisoner.'

'I'd jolly well screw his neck round, beggin' your pardon, sir.'

'I feel like that often enough, Jim. But, you see, I want him to speak, and if his neck was screwed round he couldn't speak.'

'That's so, sir. And may I tell the rest all about it, sir? They do talk now and again, and it puzzles 'em more'n a bit.'

'Yes, tell them by all means.'

I would have liked very much to hear Jim's discourse that night; but that could not be, and I had to leave our characters in his hands, believing that he would do us full justice.

The days passed pleasantly and restfully, for us at all events, who were free to revel in the fresh salt air and the glorious sunshine. For the prisoner below they must have been infinitely long and wearisome.

Never, surely, was there sweeter companion than Denise, my wife. Each day discovered fresh charms in her, new and delightful lights in her character, and depths of tenderness and sincerity which made me bless again and again the day on which I walked into the *Salon* and fell over head and ears in love with her portrait.

Now that we were really on our way to Gaston, whatever the issue of our adventure might be, her spirits were of the brightest, and her own vivid enjoyment of life irradiated a new joy of living on all around her. The men fairly worshipped her, and whenever she was on deck their eyes turned to her as naturally as flowers turn to the sun; and if by chance she spoke to one of them, he was a proud man for the rest of the day. They made up little jobs and errands that brought them within earshot of her lively chatter, and lingered long over them, and got grumbled at by their fellows for taking more than their fair share of enjoyment.

Lyle was, I could see, more than half in love with her himself, though his repressive Scotch nature kept his feelings hidden from any but a brother Scot.

As for Prudent Vaurel, he would have let her walk upon him or use him as a footstool at any hour of the day. Since she grew out of short frocks he had never seen her as she was now; for she was very happy both in the present and in her hopes of the future, and she saw no necessity for concealing it.

Even Boulot showed his enjoyment of her presence; and on the days that were fine and sunny, when the *Clutha* kept a fairly even keel and the objectionable water outside did not make itself too obtrusive, he would patrol the deck for a while by way of keeping himself fit, with the semblance of a solemn smile on his bunched-up face, and then settle himself comfortably on a bit of her skirt, and go off to sleep and dream dreams which set him whimpering with happiness—dreams maybe of strangling endless collies and taking murderers galore by the throat. Sometimes he would bark himself awake and find us all laughing at him, and then he would look foolish and with a snuffle of disgust curl himself up and go to sleep again, but always on the edge of Denise's skirts.

In fact, there was not a man on board who would not willingly have given his life for her at a moment's notice, except indeed that one down below in Macpherson's cabin, and him I had come to look upon no longer as a man but as a dumb devil.

Soon after leaving the Cape Verd Islands we had to take to steam again. We made a most prosperous and enjoyable run across the Atlantic, and struck the Brazilian coast just twelve days later; we then jogged quietly along, from Pernambuco to Bahia, from Bahia to Rio, from Rio to Buenos Ayres, encountering nothing but good weather till we came to round Cape Horn, and there we got it stiff and strong and bitterly cold, with mist and snow and blinding storms of sleet and rain.

However, we set our teeth to it, and groped and fought night and day, till at last we won through to the softer weather of the Pacific, and rejoiced once more in an even keel and the comfort of the sunshine.

We ran up the coast to Valparaiso, crammed our bunkers with every ounce of coal they could carry, and set off, under sail again, in the best of spirits for our eight thousand mile flight across the great waste of waters to the lovely farther islands.

All things prospered with us, and the men said it was because of the beauty and sweetness of the lady of the ship. And Denise was as happy as the days were long—wanting only one thing, and that we were striving to attain as fast as the winds would carry us. For both she and Vaurel were buoyed up with the sure and certain belief that our arrival at Noumea would, in some way or other, accomplish the release of Gaston, though how this was to be brought about they could neither of them say. Vaurel went even further, in moments of extreme exuberance, and expressed the belief that when we arrived we should find him already released and on his way home.

I fostered all their hopes, for it was better to be hopeful and happy than despondent and sad. But in my own mind, while hope was never absent, I could not attain to the assurance that they possessed, and wondered much and often what the end of it all would be, praying that it might be such as would satisfy to the full the desire of that sweet soul which was dearer to me than my own.

## FAIR ISLE WOMEN AT HOME.

**F**AIR ISLE is a lonely little islet lying midway between Orkney and Shetland, with the tidal eddies of the Atlantic and the North Sea swirling ceaselessly round it. The men of the isle are fishermen, and in the vexed waters that surround their home they manage their slender skiffs with the utmost daring and dexterity. The women of the isle are the makers of the far-famed Fair Isle hosiery and other knitted goods.

Everybody who has seen and handled Shetland hand-knitted woollen goods is familiar with the rare fineness of the wool, the softness of the knitted articles, and the great warmth and comfort they afford. These articles—such as fine shawls, haps, shawls, vests, stockings, gloves, &c.—are usually all made of the wool in its natural colours; and some of these colours are very peculiar. In addition to white, black, gray, and brown, there is a tawny-brown colour called *moorit* in the local Norse dialect, which looks very rare and pretty in some articles, such as small haps. A peculiarity

has often been observed in connection with this colour, which ladies using Shetland goods should carefully note—namely, that *moorit*, when exposed for lengthened periods to strong light, especially sunlight, seems to fade and practically lose its colour; yet, strange to say, this rather startling state of things can easily be remedied. On observing the fading of colour, it is only necessary to hang up the *moorit* article in a wardrobe or any other dark place, and it will soon resume its former hue. There is also a colour known locally as *sharla*, which is a kind of grayish-brown, with a strange frosted appearance. These colours, even when seen in the wool on the backs of the small native sheep, are so unusual that people observing them for the first time can hardly believe they are the natural and permanent colours of the wool.

The tourist visiting Shetland, or the purchaser entering an emporium in the south where Shetland knitted goods are sold, is struck most forcibly at first sight by another class of goods quite different in appearance from those we have alluded to. The colours are brilliant, even garish;



and it is quite evident that artificial dyes have been used. The contrast is not confined to the colours only; for patterns on an entirely new system, in the variegated and fantastic hues, meet the eye. The startling brilliancy and variety of the hues, however, claim attention before there is time to notice the patterns carefully. These colours are bright yellow, brick-red, marine-blue, and white, with here and there touches of brown and green. The general patterns consist of diamonds and stripes. The diamonds are usually formed of yellow, red, blue, and white; the stripes of red and blue. Some of the diamonds are worked to resemble hour-glasses, and in others crosses appear. In a blue diamond may be seen a cross with two of its bars worked in yellow and the two other in white, and having a small centre-piece in red. On the two yellow bars are worked a few blue stitches, and on the two white bars a few red stitches; while on the same red centre-piece there are a few white stitches. In a yellow diamond may be seen a cross with two of its bars in blue and the other two in red, and with a little centre-piece in white; on the two blue bars are some yellow stitches, on the two red bars some white stitches, and on the little centre-piece in white a few red stitches. Other tints, like the brown and green already mentioned, show at times in touches.

To produce these varied and brilliant tints the Fair Islanders use different substances, chiefly flowers, roots, minerals, and seaweed. The yellow is obtained from flowers, especially the marigold; the blue is got from *lit* or indigo—the *lit*-pot in which the dye is prepared is to be seen in almost every house; the purple, yellowish or reddish brown, orange, and a brownish or blackish purple are all obtained from lichens of various kinds, scraped from the rocks on the seashore; and purple used to be obtained from *Lichen tartareus*. This purple is known by the local name of *korkelcit*; it was brought in considerable quantities from the lonely island of Foula, which lies several miles west of the most westerly point on the mainland of Shetland. The dye was to be had in the form of balls, and these went by the name of *kurki-baas* in the local dialect. A black dye, also made in the island of Foula, is prepared by steeping and boiling certain roots. The article one wishes to dye is put into the vessel used for the purpose, and while the liquid dye is still boiling, a handful of peat-earth of a black colour, containing iron ore, is also thrown in. The white is, of course, the natural colour of the wool.

The wool of the pure native Shetland sheep is generally compared to merino on account of its fine texture. Like the Shetland pony, the pure Shetland sheep is a small and very active creature, often to be seen moving with the swiftness and agility of a goat or chamois among the cliffs and crags of the shore. For the first few months the lambs live on the hill-pasture with their mothers;

but towards the close of summer they are taken in from the hill and tethered, usually in pairs, on the grass inside the dikes that separate the hill-pasture from the crofts. This is done to give them a better chance of standing the winter; but when bad weather really sets in they are shut up in snug and comfortable little folds every night, and regularly fed. In spring they are again allowed to run free on the hill-pasture.

The wool of the native sheep is not generally clipped or shorn. On the big farms, where Cheviot and blackface sheep are kept, shearing is, of course, the practice; but the Shetlanders leave the sheep's fleece intact till the wool is ripe, so to speak, and just about to come off of itself; then it is *rooed* or pulled off carefully, so as not to hurt the creature, and any part of it that does not come off readily is left till later. The women card and spin the wool, and spend the long winter evenings knitting it by the light of the bright peat-fires on the hearths of their cosy cottages, while the rain and sleet, and perhaps the driving sea-spray, dash against the panes of the small window, and the wind roars down the stunted chimney of the low thatched roof.

The women of the Fair Isle, like the women living on the crofts all over Shetland, assist the men in most of the outdoor work. In the spring they help to delve the land, for tillage is usually done with the spade. In the early summer the men cut the peats, and then the women dry and cure them, and prepare them for winter fuel. In the autumn, too, the women are busy out of doors; they bind and carry in the sheaves of corn, and take up the potatoes. Their knitting goes on in the intervals of this work—sometimes it goes on at the same time; for when a woman is carrying peats or any other burden on her back she generally keeps her knitting-pins busy all the time.

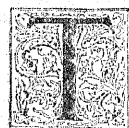
The faces that are to be seen round the bright peat-fires in the Fair Isle are—like the faces to be seen round most peat-fires in Shetland—strongly Norse in type. Perhaps the big chair with its rounded top in use in the isle, made of a wooden frame with a wattled straw back, is an imperfect reminiscence of the old 'high-seat' of the Norsemen.

The question that most naturally occurs to one's mind in reference to the artistic industry in which the women of Fair Isle are engaged is: How did they learn the art of using all those brilliant hues and variegated patterns in their knitting? It has been stated that the Fair Isle colours and designs closely resemble those of Moorish origin still to be seen lingering in the dress worn by the fisher-people in the south of Spain; and this leads up to what is the generally accepted theory of the origin of Fair Isle work: that the arts of dyeing those bright colours and of forming the fantastic patterns were taught to the islanders by the sailors of a ship belonging to the great Armada, who were

shipwrecked there in that memorable year, 1588. Some of the natives of the isle, however, say that they owe their artistic industry to fugitive Covenanters who found an asylum in that lonely

spot—some of whom were weavers skilled in making the bright and variegated tartans worn by the Highland clans. The former theory, however, seems to be the stronger of the two.

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HE Reverend Bryce-Ritson was beginning to fear that he had mistaken his profession—that he was too full of rude energy for the Church. Already he looked back with longing to the days when he rowed 'six' in the Magdalen boat; but here he was, curate in a small county town scarcely more than a village. Had it not been for that family living he might have gone in for the army. And what chances there were for getting ahead just now! Was it too late to change? He was only a deacon. The thought thrilled him. He was a round peg in a square hole. His vicar said 'Israyl' and 'Gard,' and committed other sins against his canon of taste. His bishop was unctuous and liked port wine.

Why were all these things pressing so heavily upon his spirit this particular Sunday afternoon? Well enough he knew the cause, but would not confess it even to himself. It was the same reason which had made his young lady-teachers so listless in Sunday-school—even Lily Hardinge.

Last Sunday young Turner had been one of his helpers, brought there, he felt certain, for the sake of Miss Hardinge. To-day young Turner was a volunteer, was going out to fight for the Empire, was a hero in the eyes of every girl in the town; and to-night he must robe himself and intone the service. How utterly insignificant he would feel! For young Turner would be there in his Yeomanry uniform; he would be envying him all through the function.

His spirit was in revolt. No one seemed to care now about Church matters, not even his young lady-helpers! Was he losing ground with Lily Hardinge? At bottom this was the thought which troubled him most. Was she, like the others, worshipping the soldier to the exclusion of the cleric?

Suppose matters politic got worse. Suppose America should interfere and the Continent take advantage! Suppose England fighting for her very existence! Who would care for the clergy and their work then? If it came to conscription his cloth would *protect* him; he would be sneered at as one sitting snug at home, and the soldier would—even more than at present—be the popular hero.

An abrupt knock at the door shattered his meditations; without waiting for permission a well-set fellow stepped into the room.

'Hullo, Ritson!'

It was young Turner transformed. What a difference a uniform seemed to make! How dare he address him so familiarly? He tried to put some reserve into his answering greeting; but the young fellow, taking no notice, dropped into a chair, exclaiming:

'I say, I'm glad I ain't a parson.'

'Why?'

'Oh, I don't know. You see, you fellows can't lend a hand; and—I'm glad to be rid of Church matters. I've been feeling that way for some time, and now I'm a soldier! I feel as if I'd escaped from prison. Pity you're a parson!'

The Reverend Bryce-Ritson began to feel absolutely ill as the young fellow rattled on, and it was by an effort that he managed to say, 'You must excuse me; I've my sermon to get ready—er—come again.'

Having thus got rid of his visitor, he retreated to his study and locked the door. What then happened may be left unwritten. Presently, emerging from seclusion, he re-entered his sitting-room and aimlessly took up the *Guardian*. A paragraph caught his eye; he gasped, staggered, and sat down. Then he read it through:

'The Bishop of Stamford, in his sermon yesterday, said that he saw no reason why young curates who were physically fit should not volunteer; he thought it would be a great help to them in gaining the confidence and respect of their parishioners.'

On the following Sunday the vicar announced that 'our much-respected curate, Mr Ritson, has felt obliged to give up his work here for a time.'

The frightful day was at last drawing to a close. Through the fierce heat the fight had raged, the wounded lying where they fell; many of them were now dead with thirst and horror. The terrible scorching sun was declining, and—at last—the enemy had been driven off. The Yeomanry troop, which had been the last of the supports hurried to the front, was retiring by the left, leaving the infantry in their sangars to hold the position gained, and leaving the battlefield to the surgeons and the ambulance corps. As they rode slowly along, the setting sun full in their bronzed faces, a Service Corps man hailed one of the troopers.

'Hi, there! Here's a man wants you. Fall out a minute, will yez?'

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'Oh, I don't know. You see, you fellows can't lend a hand; and—I'm glad to be rid of Church matters. I've been feeling that way for some time, and now I'm a soldier! I feel as if I'd escaped from prison. Pity you're a parson!'

The Reverend Bryce-Ritson began to feel absolutely ill as the young fellow rattled on, and it was by an effort that he managed to say, 'You must excuse me; I've my sermon to get ready—er—come again.'

Having thus got rid of his visitor, he retreated to his study and locked the door. What then happened may be left unwritten. Presently, emerging from seclusion, he re-entered his sitting-room and aimlessly took up the *Guardian*. A paragraph caught his eye; he gasped, staggered, and sat down. Then he read it through:

'The Bishop of Stamford, in his sermon yesterday, said that he saw no reason why young curates who were physically fit should not volunteer; he thought it would be a great help to them in gaining the confidence and respect of their parishioners.'

On the following Sunday the vicar announced that 'our much-respected curate, Mr Ritson, has felt obliged to give up his work here for a time.'

The frightful day was at last drawing to a close. Through the fierce heat the fight had raged, the wounded lying where they fell; many of them were now dead with thirst and horror. The terrible scorching sun was declining, and—at last—the enemy had been driven off. The Yeomanry troop, which had been the last of the supports hurried to the front, was retiring by the left, leaving the infantry in their sangars to hold the position gained, and leaving the battlefield to the surgeons and the ambulance corps. As they rode slowly along, the setting sun full in their bronzed faces, a Service Corps man hailed one of the troopers.

'Hi, there! Here's a man wants you. Fall out a minute, will yez?'

'Wants *me?*' said the trooper addressed, as, pulling his near rein, he fell out of line.

'Come this way,' said the other in reply.

A few yards off lay a man, evidently far gone. Trooper Ritson dismounted and went up to him.

'I—*thought* it was you—Mr Ritson!'

'What! Turner, my poor chap! Yes, it's I.'

'So—you came after all. I could swear to your face through all the tan.'

'I'm afraid you're badly hit.'

'Yes. Think so. Done for, I guess—and all through—— Show him,' he said, turning his face to the ambulance-man, who, in answer, held out a leather case all bent and wrecked, containing the half-obliterated likeness of Lily Hardinge.

Ritson's hand involuntarily went to the breast-pocket of his tunic.

'What!' said the dying man, with a sharp glance and sickly smile. 'You too?'

'Yes,' stammered Ritson.

'If it hadn't been for that thing I might have escaped; it deflected the bullet and sent it through my chest. Been a Bible it would have been all right, I suppose—eh?'

'My poor chap! I'm *awfully* sorry.'

'Guess she sent us both here. Did you know that Lewson was after her?'

'What! That dealer?'

'Dealer? Jew millionaire!'

'I—didn't know.'

'Bet you she marries him—curse her!'

'*Don't!* Can I do anything for you?'

'Think not. But I'm glad we met. Don't you bother yourself about a'—

'Hush, old fellow, hush!'

'All right. Let's look at her, then. You've got one,' and he feebly pointed.

Ritson sheepishly drew a case from his pocket, and as he bent over the dying man they together looked on the girl who had flirted with both.

'Ah!' sighed Turner, 'not bad to look at—is she?'

'Now, Parker,' said a strange voice close behind them, 'get this chap on board the cart.'

It was one of the surgeons.

With a hand-clasp and a cheery, 'I'll see you again,' Ritson rode off to rejoin his troop.

Turner smiled grimly. 'I'm dying—ain't I, doctor?' he asked.

'Fraid so,' was the answer, curt but full of feeling.

For a brief moment, as Bryce-Ritson rode off, he triumphed. 'The road is clear; I'll win her yet.' Instantly he threw aside the thought. 'I *must* be a brute to think such a thing. Poor young Turner! I hope he may pull through; and she—can wait.'

It was not to be. When he found time to get to the hospital-tent Turner was already dead.

Three weeks later. Much had happened in the interval. There was a short period of rest for

the main army. It was mail-day; the cart had just driven in. Bryce-Ritson sat alone in his tent thinking. How much his ideas had broadened during the past three months! How often he had been in touch with death, especially during that half-hour at Klipfontein when they had saved the guns and, as reward, heard Bob's 'Well done, Yeomanry!' How utterly apart he was for evermore from the Church! Now the hardest work was over and the war looked like ending, what was his future life to be? Could he remain a soldier? That was his desire; but he felt that as a private this would be impossible.

There was a step at the tent door, and Bell, his chum, came rushing in.

'Hurrah, Ritson! Good man! You're offered a commission for that Klipfontein business.'

'Commission? Klipfontein? Why, what did I do?'

'Ra—ats! But, by Jove! old chap, I congratulate you. And here—here's your mail—only a newspaper. I say, will you accept that commission?'

'Will I *not!* Thanks, old fellow, for your good wishes.'

'Well, so-long just now. Read your paper.'

Ritson opened it, and at once saw a marked paragraph announcing that Lily Hardinge had married Mathew Lewson.

He sat for a few moments staring at the notice; then, rising, he threw the paper down.

'What an escape!' he said.

As if with reluctance, he drew out her photograph and once more looked on the well-remembered face.

'I suppose you are no worse than other women: a mystery to the cleverest of us; and yet to me you were everything—so I thought. Well, dear, good-bye!' and tearing it across, he threw it from him.

'The army shall take her place,' he said; and his eyes kindled at the thought of the honour which had been done him.

#### SONNET.

The dying leaves are drifting to and fro  
Upon the fitful winds; the seas run high,  
And, on the wet and glist'ning shore below,  
Their crested waves are breaking angrily.  
Across the sands, in reckless dance and mad,  
The scattered leaves of yellow gorse are whirled,  
Now here, now there, until, far o'er the sad  
Gray waves, from human sight, at last they're hurled.  
Out o'er the surf, with eerie, startled cries,  
The seagulls take their lonely, wheeling flight.  
Slow sinks the sun in stormy, purpled skies,  
In golden splendour of tempestuous light,  
And the dark shadow of its sombre wings,  
The autumn night, o'er land and ocean flings.

M. C. C.



# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.



### LEGAL SHREDS AND PATCHES.

**I**N one of his speeches delivered some few years ago Lord Rosebery said there was nothing more engaging in private life than a little recklessness. Opinions may vary on that point; but most people who have

undergone the experiment will admit that, after a long search through the musty archives of the law, there is no pleasure comparable to studying its absurdities, however reckless the proceeding may be.

Lord Rosebery himself must have regarded with surprise the law which apparently took away from him the copyright of his speeches and gave it to a reporter. He has, however, published his Oliver Cromwell speech in self-defence; apparently with success, for no paper has yet brought an action against him for disturbing its rights in it. Whether the law of copyright requires alteration or not is for other people to say; many think there are other laws more urgently requiring revisal; others, again, regret the legal impossibility of checking some pet offences of the men they meet every day. If Mr Rudyard Kipling and Private Thomas Atkins were asked for an opinion, something might be said about the necessity of a law regulating the translation of literary work; for Italy has gained a wrong impression of the British army through the perusal of '*Il Mendicante Distratto*,' in which guise 'The Absent-minded Beggar' has been served up to them. City men might have said something about the company laws, but on that subject Parliament has recently provided fresh legislation.

The legal mind is never surprised at anything; but the casual inquirer would probably find many things to wonder at in a search through the laws relating to marriage. It is possible for a man to be married in France, in the Channel Islands, or even in Scotland, and yet in England be a bachelor. In the year 1288 the Scottish Parliament passed an act by which it was decreed that in leap-year a 'maiden lady of either high or low estate shall have liberty to speak to the man she likes. If he refuses to take her to be his wife he shall be mulct in the sum of one hundred pounds

or less, as his estate may be, except and always if he can make it appear that he is betrothed to another woman, then he shall be free.' Matrimony can scarcely be said to be one of those small things about which the law does not trouble itself; and an action brought under this statute would be of interest to everybody save the defendant. If a daughter elopes and gets married, the father has usually no legal redress; but if a servant runs away for the same purpose he is legally indemnified. In the United States there is an act penalising any woman who betrays a man into matrimony by means of 'scents, cosmetics, washes, paints, artificial teeth, false hair, or high-heeled shoes.' This act, though unrepealed, is uselessly encumbering the United States statute book, because the penalty incurred is 'the penalty now in force against witchcraft and the like misdemeanours.' The penalty is rather appropriate for the offence, even beyond the suggestion of the old riddle about the Missouri and the Mississippi. Old statutes, though unrepealed, are often evaded by some such means as the act just mentioned would be. Readers with good memories may remember how Mr Balfour, about two years ago, evaded a question relative to the punishment of absent members of Parliament. Some one discovered that under an old act members absenting themselves from the deliberations of the House were punishable by the loss of their wages. A question based on this discovery was put to Mr Balfour, and he replied that, as members were not now paid, this act against absenteeism could not be enforced. It may here be mentioned that according to eminent legal authority members of Parliament are still entitled to salaries.

There are many laws extant relative to the due observance of Sunday. Most of the old Sumptuary Acts have a clause laying down regulations about the special clothes to be worn on Sundays and holidays. By an act of the year 1603 a fine is authorised to be levied on the goods of all persons absenting themselves from church on Sunday. The last successful case under this act was heard in the year 1864. Isaac Walton, not the 'compleat angler,'



but a less famous namesake, was fined for refusing to attend church at the request of his mistress; and there is an instance on record of a boy causing his mother to be fined for the same offence. According to law, no one is allowed to take a drive in his carriage on a Sunday without getting a certificate stating that he has urgent business to perform. Prosecutions for Sunday trading have been brought at the instance of the Sunday Closing Society; so perhaps it is worthy of note that a private gentleman may sell a horse on Sunday, but a horse-dealer may not. With regard to horses, the law recognises eleven vices and fifty-seven defects and diseases which constitute unsoundness.

Whatever may be said about the ambiguity of the law, there is one subject on which it is most explicit, and that is—of all things in the world—swans. Of course, it is not fair to urge that neither Brown, Smith, nor Jones are legally interested in these birds; in dealing with the law we must take it as we find it, for better or for worse, with the same spirit of hopeful uncertainty in which we go through another ordeal. A very important case is that of the Abbotsbury Swans, decided in the year 1591. A legal commentator says: 'The result of the litigation in this case settled the law of swans upon a basis which has never been disturbed. The rights and ownerships, and the laws affecting them, were placed in so clear a light that the case has become a leading authority on the subject.' Amongst other things, this case decided that all white swans, not marked, and having gained their natural liberty, belong to the Queen; hence the annual visits of the swan-owning Livery Companies to the Thames. Another old swan case is that of *Lord Strange v. Sir John Charlton*, which is referred to by Sir Matthew Arundel in his judgment on the Abbotsbury Swans. By this case it was decided that 'cygnets belong equally to the owner of the cock and to the owner of the hen, and shall be divided between them.' The writer has been unable to find out what is to be done with the remaining cygnet when the number is odd; but on every other point the law is so clear that there is no necessity to apply to a legal authority for a decision.

It is possible for many absurdities to get into a bill as it creeps clause by clause through Parliament. The famous Prison Act is a good example. An economical member proposed and carried a clause which decreed that the new jail to be built in a certain locality should be constructed out of the materials of the old jail already existing there. Later on another member got a clause added to the effect that prisoners should be kept in the old jail till the new one was finished. It was stated last year, on legal authority, that if a tramway company applied to Parliament for powers to build a tramway in any town, Parliament would ask whether the municipal authorities were prepared to build the tramway themselves. If the question was answered in the negative, Parliament would

then grant the necessary powers to the company. In other words, if the promoters of a tramway company apply for powers to lay down and work a tramway in a town, the authorities must either acquiesce or build the tramway at the public expense.

It is illegal to sell a vacant ecclesiastical benefice, the seller being guilty of simony; but before a benefice is actually vacant the next presentation may be lawfully sold. Previous to the passing of the Medical Act a physician could not recover his fees by any legal process if his patient refused to pay, unless the patient or some other person had specially contracted to make payment. Passing to a law relating to another class of society, if Smith starts a hare on the land of Brown, hunts it down, and kills it there, the hare belongs to Brown, and Smith is liable to an action for trespass; if Smith, however, starts a hare on the ground of Brown, and hunts it on to the land of Jones and kills it there, the hare belongs to Smith; but both Brown and Jones can bring an action of trespass against him.

'Mine host' is bound by law to admit to his house all persons peaceably applying for lodgment; and, further, he must take in his guest's goods, unless they be too bulky or dangerous, 'such as dynamite or tigers'—to give Lord Esher's interpretation. If the guest is unable, or unwilling, to pay his account, the innkeeper may detain everything belonging to his guest except the clothes and property carried on his person. An action cannot be brought against an innkeeper for detaining the horse of a guest unless the amount due for its keep has been paid or tendered. The innkeeper, however, can only keep the horse in the stable or walk him in the yard for exercise; he cannot use the horse for any purpose or in any way; and even if the horse-keep amounts to the value of the animal, or beyond it, he cannot sell the horse; but if he live in the city of London or in Exeter he can take the animal for his own use on the appraisement of four of his neighbours.

The law does not recognise orthography, and will proceed against Frank Phillips or against Phrangk Fyllpse with perfect composure. Some facetious person, instead of writing 'I owe you,' saw fit to express the obligation by the three letters 'I O U;,' and this has now become the set form. A piece of paper bearing the words, 'I O U Fifty Pounds,' written and signed by the debtor and addressed to the creditor, is admissible in evidence without a stamp, as being merely a simple acknowledgment of the debt; but if the document read, 'I O U Fifty Pounds, to be paid on the 28th inst.,' it would be worthless unless it bore an *ad valorem* stamp.

No one has found any fossil remains of the prehistoric ass, but the family is widely distributed, and observations were taken of the order in Greek and Roman times. In Rome he was to be met with on all sides. In legal deeds and lawsuits the word 'timbers' was held to include

bricks; a married woman was for certain legal purposes supposed to be an unmarried woman; the purchaser of a bankrupt's property was allowed to rank as the bankrupt's heir. In primitive Roman times, when possession of a piece of land was in dispute, the judges went with the claimants to the ground in question, heard the arguments, and gave their decision there and then. In the course of time the judges complained that they were overworked, as judges have done since, and their presence was tacitly dispensed with. The claimants now proceeded to the ground by themselves, had their mock fight (the Romans called the process 'joining hands,' but nasty knocks would occasionally be given), and brought back to the court a clod of earth to which they both laid claim as representing the property in question. Employers of Queen's Counsel at eight guineas a day will appreciate the fact that the Roman litigant did not pay his counsel anything, but was under a moral obligation to leave him something in his will.

The German law of libel is a curiosity. An editor recently said in his paper that a certain gentleman 'was an unmannerly boor,' in consequence of which a libel action was brought against the paper. The evidence given seemed to show that the only fault with the expression was that it was not strong enough. The case was taken from court to court in the usual way, until it reached the highest tribunal; the final decision was that the editor would have been perfectly justified if he had said that the plaintiff 'had acted like an unmannerly boor;' but since he had said that the plaintiff actually 'was an unmannerly boor,' he had committed libel. In Germany it is libellous to call a man a pig or an ass; but if you combine the two and call a man a pig-ass, then there is no libel, because such an animal does not exist. The favourite combination among Germans is, we believe, pig-dog—*schweinehund*.

The English law of libel makes profanity a money-saving vice. If you call a man a thief, and cannot prove your assertion, you commit libel. If, however, you garnish your description by any of the adjectives usually deemed unfit for publication, any libel action brought against you will fall through, for the law says your profanity proves that you have lost your temper, and therefore you are not actionable for your words.

The legal stupidities of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were tempered by the merciful verdicts of the juries, who looked rather at the triviality of the offences than at the guilt of the prisoners. Thus, since it was a capital offence to steal anything worth more than a shilling, juries would frequently appraise stolen articles of considerable value at a shilling, or even under, to reduce the offence to petty larceny. In one of the more recent cases a jury found a man guilty of stealing a pair of leather breeches. After de-

livering their verdict, the jury discovered, to their horror, that under the then existing law the only possible sentence was the death-penalty. It was illegal to alter the verdict; but the jury were allowed to add to it, and they adjudged the man guilty of 'manslaughter,' which permitted a sentence of imprisonment. Of course, if the death-sentence had been passed in this case, the man would have subsequently been reprieved, for cases of this kind always received careful consideration from the king in council. George III., in particular, always exhibited great anxiety in these matters, for he was known to sit late into the night pondering over the pros and cons of some verdict. Sometimes advantage was taken of a petty offence to punish a man for some former crime. For instance, three men—Probert, Hunt, and Thurtell—being on trial for the murder of a Mr Weare, Probert turned king's evidence, and his two confederates were hanged. A year later, however, Probert was hanged for horse-stealing.

The fifties saw a sweeping-out of old statutes and a general refurbishing. Richard Roe and John Doe, the gentlemen through whose agency all actions of ejectment were performed, were themselves ejected from the house of the law. Before this time every landlord bringing an action of ejectment had first to proceed, not against his tenant, but against an imaginary person, Richard Roe; and procedure was not in his own character, but by the agency of an imaginary person, John Doe. The action was set forth in a declaration, and subscribed to it was a notice in the shape of a letter from the fictitious defendant to the tenant in possession, apprising the latter of the nature and the object of the proceeding, and advising him to appear in court and defend his possession. Accordingly the next term the tenant obtained a rule of court allowing him, upon certain terms, to be made defendant instead of Richard Roe. 'These,' says Serjeant Stephen, an old legal commentator, 'are fictions invented and upheld by the courts for the convenience of justice.' At the present time a legal demand for the rent is the same as it was hundreds of years ago. The landlord making a legal demand for his rent has a lot of things to observe; amongst them, he has to attend on the premises between the hours of sunrise and sunset and, in the presence of three witnesses, demand, with a loud voice three times, his rent. But this process is usually avoided by a careful wording of the agreement between the landlord and his tenant.

Sir William Blackstone speaks of what he calls 'the mutual altercations' between parties at law with one another. The plaintiff began with a Declaration or Count, a wordy document extending over many skins of parchment, to which the defendant answered by a Plea, equally voluminous. Then the plaintiff, if he had more to say or thought the defence insufficient, replied with a Replication. If the defendant did not agree with

plaintiff's Replication, he answered with a Rejoinder. If the Rejoinder was unsatisfactory the plaintiff flew to another document in the shape of a Surrejoinder, which was met by a Rebutter, to which plaintiff replied with a Surrebutter. When the plaintiff and defendant had fought one another inch by inch over this acreage of parchment, it was time to get a final decision. The thought suddenly occurred to some one that it might be possible to dispense with all this parchment, and accordingly the authorities devised a shorter and quicker method. This saving was

effected so long ago that litigants have forgotten to be thankful, and are now sharply criticising what in their opinion are shortcomings or absurdities. Though Lord Coke observed long ago, 'No man, out of his own private reason, ought to be wiser than the law, which is the perfection of wisdom,' yet no man likes himself or his profession 'to be writ down an ass;' whilst, on the other hand, people are always ready to fly to the law, except as jurymen, and they only grumble when the law decides against them or when the solicitor has sent in his bill of costs.

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

CHAPTER XXIV.—BY THE FRONT DOOR ONLY.



AUREL and I and the Captain took counsel together, over many pipes, in the night watches, as to the plan to be followed when we reached New Caledonia.

It was quite evident that Lepard would die speechless sooner than disclose what we wanted so much to learn, and what to do with him I was somewhat at a loss to know.

Vaurel's plan was a bold one.

'Put me quietly ashore somewhere handy,' said he, 'and I'll get into the settlement and find out where Monsieur Gaston is. Then, if it is possible, we shall carry Monsieur le Colonel in some night and leave him there, and bring Monsieur Gaston away with us. That's the idea. Exchange the right man for the wrong one.'

'There is only one difficulty, Vaurel,' I said, 'and that is that Monsieur Gaston would not come.'

'Who knows, monsieur? Imprisonment tells on a man's spirit whether he's innocent or not, and if it be long enough and strong enough he breaks. They say they treat them pretty well out there. But I know if I was in there and knew that my sister was waiting outside for me I'd come out like a shot if the chance offered. Still,' he said, with a half-doubtful shake of the head, 'there's no knowing. We're not all built the same way.'

'He won't come,' I said; 'but we can give him the chance.'

I discussed the matter with Denise also, and disclosed Vaurel's plan to her. But she said decisively, 'He will not come,' and then more slowly, 'and I do not think I would wish him to come, though I hunger for the sight of him. Perhaps I could see him, Hugh, even though he will not come away with us?'

'Surely we could manage that much. But I hope in some way we can do more.'

'Oh, we shall; I am sure we shall. I feel it. We shall take him back with us, and he will come back with us in honour. I know it, though I can't see how it's going to come about.'

But she believed it thoroughly, and the belief kept her spirits at high pitch and made life bright for her, and so for us.

Week after week we slipped along through those quiet waters, under skies of wonderful flawless blue, till the long smooth rollers and the infinite solitudes had come to be a part of our lives; and when at last we made the Australs, and thence wove a devious course among the myriad lovely islands scattered like emeralds about those seas, the sight of them and the delight of them were things which will remain with all of us as long as life lasts.

And so at last, one bright morning, Captain Lyle pointed to a faint blue blur on the lift of the water-line in front, and told us it was New Caledonia; and the feeling that all our hopes were coming to the point worked us up into such a state of excitement that speech was almost impossible, and eating, beyond the absolutely necessary minimum, quite out of question.

According to our plans, we kept a wide offing round the south of the island, and crept up the farther side, keeping the peaks in view and no more. There was always, of course, the chance of our coming across some patrol gunboat, but we saw nothing of the kind; and as soon as night drew on we ran in under steam, and stole down the western coast with every light hidden, till, in the distance, over a promontory, a lightening of the darkness up above told us that Noumea lay just beyond.

Then the boat was lowered and Vaurel and I got into it, with four men to row.

We crept in cautiously, taking our chances of the surf, and got safely ashore. Vaurel tumbled out, wrung my hand in silence, and disappeared into the darkness.

We were to return the following night to the same spot as nearly as we could strike it, and wait there till he came.

It was a venture full of risks. In a penal settlement a strange face was almost sure to excite suspicion and cause inquiry, and Vaurel's



eyes were quite open to the possibility of it all ending in an addition of one to the colony without any advancement of our ends. We had reason to believe, however, that ordinary prison rules were not much enforced, and that the prisoners were left very largely to themselves. He took with him a supply of food for himself, and tobacco enough to purchase a considerable amount of good-will.

As soon as he was ashore we pulled quietly back to the schooner, and assured the waiting ones there that he had made a good start on his venture. Then the yacht crept out to sea again, and we spent the next day in a state of suspense that was trying to nerves and tempers, and subversive of anything more than the most elementary rules of social intercourse.

Denise, who felt the strain more than any of us perhaps, kept to her room for the greater part of the day. Boulot perambulated the ship doggedly in search of his master, and snuffled discontentedly at not finding him. Lyle raked the horizon all day long for obtrusive cruisers, but found none, and was satisfied.

That was as long a day as ever I spent, and there was nothing to shorten it. Our thoughts were across the water there, with Vaurel, and our anxiety as to his welfare was great.

I took in to Denise the daintiest dishes the cook could concoct, but she could eat nothing. To please me she trifled with morsels, but ate no more than a sparrow.

'You will take me with you to-night, Hugh?' she asked.

'Not to-night, dearest. We must hear first what Vaurel has found out. Many things might have happened, you know. Everything might have come out in Paris, and Gaston might be on his way home.'

'Or he might be dead,' she said gloomily, yielding for a moment to the pressure of her anxieties.

'We must just hope for the best,' I said, finding few words with which to comfort her, for in truth the possibility of Gaston's death seemed to me as likely as any.

'You will come back and tell me as quickly as possible?' she said.

'Just as quick as the boat can bring me.'

As night drew on we crept in towards the land again; and then, in pursuance of our plans, the boat was lowered, and, no doubt to his intense surprise, Colonel Lepard, bound and gagged, was handed down into it, and we started for the shore.

What the Colonel imagined we were going to do with him I cannot tell; but his eyes, as I saw him carried up on deck, were full of apprehension. He probably thought we were sick of him, and were going to make an end of him.

We struck the shore as near the spot where we had landed Vaurel as we could hit it, and we

had not been there five minutes when a subdued 'Hist!' a little way down the beach announced him. We replied, and he stole quietly in among us.

'Is he there?' I asked in a whisper.

'Yes, monsieur, he is there; but I have not spoken to him. I thought it best not to make two bites of the matter, and your words will weigh more with him than mine. He mixes very little with the others, and has a hut apart. It is at this end, just over the bluff there. We can get to him without difficulty. Have you the Colonel there, monsieur?'

'He is in the boat.'

'You can bring him a good half-mile nearer. A patrol travels along the road there now and again; but they make noise enough, and there is no difficulty in avoiding them. Shall we take him with us? Then, if Monsieur Gaston agrees, we can make the exchange at once and get away.'

'We will take him as near to the place as we can; but he had better remain in the boat till we have spoken with Gaston. I doubt very much if he will consent.'

'We can only try.'

I ordered the men to row quietly along the shore till they heard our signal to come in; then Vaurel and I walked along towards the glimmer over the rise in front.

'And is he well, Vaurel; and how does he stand it?'

'As one would expect, monsieur. His heart, they say, is almost broken, and he scarcely ever speaks to any of them.'

'Had you any trouble in getting in?'

'None at all. The guards are at the other end, towards the town. There is nowhere for them to go to up this way, and if they escape to the hills the natives will make an end of them. *Tiens!* here comes the patrol. I hope the boat will hear them.'

The boat heard, lying as quiet as we lay in the bushes; and the patrol, marching anyhow, tramped noisily past.

'They will be back in half-an-hour or so,' said Vaurel. 'We can do nothing till they have gone; then we have a clear field.'

So we lay and waited patiently till they came noisily back again; and as soon as they were out of hearing we climbed back into the road and set out again towards the light overhead.

Then we left the path and took to the broken ground by the sea, stumbling along in the dark as best we could, till at last Vaurel said, 'Now, monsieur, this is the nearest the boat can get to Monsieur Gaston's hut. It is just over the brow there.'

We signalled, and the boat came silently in.

'Pull out twenty yards and wait for us, Barnes,' I said to the bo'sun. 'Don't come in till we signal. If we don't come in an hour, pull back to the ship;' and we started to cross the neck of the promontory.

Ten minutes' scramble, and Vaurel laid his hand on my arm, saying, '*Voilà!*' and in front of me I could make out a small hut like a beehive. It was just a darker smudge on the darkness, and there was no sign or sound of occupancy.

'You are quite sure?' I whispered.

'Quite sure. I saw him go in several times to-day, and there is no other hut near it.'

We stole to the doorway, which was covered by a mat, and entered. We could not distinguish even the sound of breathing. I struck a match, and the light glimmered on the white face of a young man lying on a bed of dry ferns. Though the face was thin and worn and very sad, I knew by its likeness to Denise that this was the man we sought. He was sleeping quietly, with his head on his outstretched arm.

Suddenly his eyes opened wide on the light. He lay for a moment looking at us, and then started up into a sitting posture.

'Well, what is it now?' he asked.

'Monsieur Gaston!' said Vaurel in a whisper, in that same tone of loving deference which he used when he spoke to 'ma'm'selle.'

Gaston peered up at him with puckered brow. Then the match burned out. I struck another, and he pointed silently to a tiny earthenware lamp with a wick and oil in it. When I turned from lighting it his face was just breaking into recognition of Vaurel.

'Vaurel!' he murmured. 'It is Prudent Vaurel—is it not?'

'In truth, Monsieur Gaston.'

'Prudent Vaurel!' he said again to himself in a tone of extreme wonder, and drew his hand across his eyes as though to clear them of doubt. 'And this—who is this?'

'I am the husband of your sister Denise, Monsieur Gaston. My name is Hugh Lamont. I am an Englishman.'

'The husband of Denise! My poor little Denise! And she is married?'

'She is married, and only needs one thing to complete her happiness, and that is her brother. We have come to ask you to go to her.'

'Go to her? But how?'

'My yacht is off the coast. You can be on board in half-an-hour.'

He got up and stood facing me, upright and slim, and looked at me with Denise's eyes.

'Do you propose that I should do this?' he asked.

'It was I, Monsieur Gaston,' broke in Vaurel, with what has since struck me as a fine and instant appreciation of his young master's feeling in the matter. 'Ma'm'selle hungers for you. Will you not go to her?'

'Has she also asked it?' he said.

And we stood silent.

'No,' he said, 'it is not possible. I came in

by the front door, and by the front door I must go out. It will come, my friends. It must come. The good God will not allow an innocent man to suffer for ever. How I long to see her!' he broke out again. 'Is she well, monsieur? Is she happy?'

'Denise is well, Gaston, and happy—but for the want of you. As Prudent says, she hungers for you.'

'My poor little Denise! Where is she, monsieur?'

'She is here, on the yacht, and aching for the sight of you.'

'Here?' he said, beginning to pace the half-dozen steps the hut allowed him, with a quick turn that showed how used he was to that short caged walk. 'Here?' and I could see the tight clenching of the jaw inside his sunken cheek. 'You tempt me strongly, monsieur,' he said at last through his teeth. 'I think you had better go, or I may forget myself.'

'Gaston, my brother,' I said, gripping his hand in mine, 'I never for one moment believed you would go, nor did Denise; but—it is a long story. We have got Colonel Lepard here.'

'Lepard!' he hissed, blazing and shaking in white fury—'Lepard!—to have my hands at his throat!—just for a minute. I would shake those cursed lies out of him. The traitor—the liar—where is he?'

'He lies gagged and bound in my boat not ten minutes' distance away.'

He started towards the door.

'Stay, Gaston!' I said; 'that is no good. You will get no word out of him in that way. I have a suggestion. Come with me now out to the yacht and make Denise's heart glad with the sight of you, and I will tell you what we have been attempting on your behalf as we go.'

He looked me through and through with those straight eyes of his, which were so very like my wife's.

'You will bring me back?'

'I will bring you back the moment you say the word.'

'You are the husband of Denise—I will trust you. Come, let us go. Denise, my dear one—to see you again!'

'Is there any risk in your leaving your hut?' I asked.

'None,' he said. 'I am rarely visited. They know I would not escape if I could. Let us hasten.'

We set off through the darkness, Vaurel in advance, and as we went I hurriedly gave Gaston an outline of some of the late occurrences.

'Znyler!' he broke in when I happened to mention his name. 'I knew he was in it. Lepard and I fell out over certain matters'—

'I know—he wanted to marry Denise, and you would not let him.'

'And he planned this thing to get me out of the way—curse him! It has added tenfold to my burden to think that he might be getting his own way with her through my absence. I thank God it is not so. Monsieur Lamont, we owe you much.'

'The debt is all on my side, and we will have you free yet.'

When I told him how we had captured Lepard and held him prisoner all these months, and of his dumb bedevilment, he was amazed. I told him of Vaurel's plan of substituting Lepard for himself and carrying him away in the yacht.

'He is a good fellow is Prudent,' he said, 'but he does not see things quite as we others do. How will it all end?' he sighed.

'Sooner or later the truth will come out,' I said; 'for anything we know, it may be out now. Be sure we will never cease working for it.'

'You give me hope,' he said warmly.

We reached the shore and signalled to the boat; and when at last she came stealing in, a whisper bundled Lepard into the bows, and we stepped on board without another word.

We pulled along the shore to as near as we could guess the place where we landed, and then made straight for the schooner; and the old sea-dog Barnes had timed his distances so well that we found her with no great difficulty. I could tell by the triumphant spring the men put into their oars that they believed we had succeeded in effecting another escape, and they were full of elation at the fact.

Eager eyes and ears were on the lookout for us, and a little quiet signalling brought us alongside.

I whispered to Vaurel to have the Colonel taken back to his cabin, and went up the gang-way first, with Gaston at my heels. There were no lights on deck, but Denise was at my side as I set foot on it. Gaston heard the rustle of her dress and cried, 'Denise!' and she was in his arms in a moment, laughing and crying, and sobbing out the pent-up longings of months. I got them down into the cabin, where the windows were all tightly shrouded so that no gleam should escape outside, and was leaving them together, when, to my amazement, I felt the throbbing of the screw, and the yacht was on the move.

Gaston felt it at the same moment and sprang up angrily.

'What is this, Monsieur Lamont? You promised me, and I trusted you.'

'Come with me for a moment,' I said. 'I gave no orders. It is a mistake.'

I ran up on deck, and he followed me. Lyle was on the bridge, and the schooner was heading for the open sea.

'Stop her, Captain!' I shouted.

'Why, what's wrong?' he called down.

'Stop her; then come down, and I'll tell you.'

He signalled down below; the screw stopped working, and he came down to us.

'What's up?' he asked. 'I thought you'd want to put all you could between us and the land before morning.'

'No; I'm under pledge to Monsieur Gaston des Comptes to return him to his prison as soon as he says the word. Allow me to introduce you—Gaston, this is Captain Lyle.'

'Well, what an idea!' said Lyle, in genuine amazement. 'You want to go back there, sir?'

'I must go back, Captain,' said Gaston in English. 'I am a prisoner, but I am innocent, and to escape would be an admission of guilt. I shall never leave my prison till I leave it without stain.'

'Well, I am'—began Lyle.

'Now, if you will permit me, I shall return to my sister. My minutes are few,' broke in Gaston, and he went down again to the cabin.

'Well, Lyle, what do you think of that?' I said.

He scratched his head. 'It's all very fine,' he said, 'but it's not business—not the business we came on anyway, I reckon. The men'll be all broke up. They're all as pleased as Punch at helping him out, and to take him back! It's enough to give 'em the sulks.'

'I'm afraid we must consider Monsieur Des Comptes' feelings before theirs,' I said; 'and he only consented to come on condition that I took him back.'

'It's for you to say, sir,' he said; but he was evidently much put out.

I went down after a time, to find Denise sitting by her brother's side, his hand in both hers, and her eyes shining and sparkling. She stretched one hand to me and drew me into their communion.

'I was just wanting you, Hugh,' she said. 'Ah! if I could only have you both always I would ask no more.'

'That will come, dearest,' I said. 'You and I will give our lives to it, and the wrong shall be righted if human endeavours can bring it about.'

'How do they treat you, Gaston?' I asked. 'Can we help in any way to make the time more bearable?'

'You can leave me some books and all the tobacco you can spare, and newspapers, if you have any. The regulations are not strictly enforced. The new governor is Godefroi de la Rocherelle. You remember him, Denise? He is some relation of ours.'

'Godefroi de la Rocherelle!' said Denise. 'Why, he is our fourth—eighth—sixteenth cousin;' and she fell a-thinking.

Gaston turned to me. 'If you could get hold of that man you named, Zuyler, you might pick up the threads. He is purely an adventurer. He is purchasable, I should say.'

'Unfortunately he is dead. Lepard killed him



with his own hands at Cour-des-Comptes. Vaurel witnessed it.'

'That is a misfortune,' he said quietly. 'Those two had the whole matter between them.'

'Do you care to see Lepard?' I asked.

He sat for a while with his eyes on the floor, and then said:

'No, I will not see him. It could do no good, and would only rouse the devil in me, as every thought of him did for the first two months. The recollection of my meeting with Denise and yourself will help me more.' Then after a while he asked, 'When will you be leaving here?'

'We have no plans made. Can you suggest any means of making this Lepard tell what he knows? I am half-inclined to hand him over to the governor for the murder of Captain Zuyler.'

'I know no way of making a man speak if he has made up his mind not to. You could land him and me up the coast where the natives are, and let us fight it out. I should kill him, and there would be some satisfaction in the doing of it; but—that is not the way out.'

'We shall go into the port to-morrow,' said Denise, as the result of her cogitations, 'and learn if anything has turned up in our absence. I have a right to call on our sixteenth cousin, surely.'

'You will not tell him you called on me first?' said Gaston.

'No; we shall simply make a friendly call as we were in the neighbourhood, and ask what is the latest news from home.'

'I had better get back,' said Gaston. 'Shall I see you again, I wonder?' and he looked wistfully at her.

'You shall see us again and often,' said Denise; and he kissed her, and we went up on deck.

We pulled back to the shore in silence, and Vaurel and I accompanied him to his hut, carrying a store of books and such papers as we had picked up on our journeyings, and a good-sized packet of tobacco. He wrung our hands, and we went heavily back to the boat.

'This is foolishness. Why couldn't he come with us and leave that animal Lepard in his place?' growled Vaurel.

'He comes of a race that cannot do mean things, Vaurel.'

'Mean things! It is those others who keep him there that do the mean things. Monsieur Gaston never did an underhand thing in his life.'

'That's just why he won't steal his liberty.'

But Vaurel considered it all foolishness, and would not be comforted.

## WATER-POWER AND ELECTRICITY.

**I**N these days of increasing international competition for commercial supremacy, it is a common statement that the high place hitherto occupied by Great Britain is threatened by the energy of other nations, and that, unless we rouse ourselves from that state of self-complacency to which our previous success has given rise, we shall soon fall far in the rear in the great march which is at present being made along the path of commercial advancement.

In this country, the birthplace of Watt and of Stephenson, it is but natural, in the face of these alarmist statements, to compare our position as engineers with that of other nations. In whatever direction we turn, we find that, however great the progress we have made since the days of these pioneers, if other nations have not actually outstripped us, they have made immense strides towards doing so in a race in which we have for so long held first place.

In the branch of the industry devoted to electrical engineering this keen competition is perhaps most marked; and it is only a most sanguine, and we venture to say ill-informed, person who would make the assertion that we are the most capable exponents of the latest developments of electrical enterprise, and that of

all nations we are best able to supply the wants of the many industries throughout the world, which depend to a large extent for their successful operation on the use of electricity in one form or another.

As we are favoured in this country with an abundant supply of coal, it is but natural, and in fact most reasonable, that we should devote our attention to developing the best and most economical methods of obtaining our power from its consumption; but those countries which are not so fortunate in their fuel-supply have had perforce to turn their attention in other directions, and, by utilising the resources placed by nature at their disposal, to carry on their industries by methods often widely different from ours. Undoubtedly the most notable in this respect is Switzerland, which, being almost entirely devoid of coal, or indeed of minerals of any kind, has been able to develop an industry which promises to be of immeasurable value in the future manufacturing and industrial power of the world—namely, the utilisation of water-power, and the conveyance of that power in the form of electricity to such points, distant or near, where it can be most profitably turned to account. In other countries—America, for instance—water-power is taken advantage of to a considerable extent, as witness the most prominent example at Niagara; but in

no country does the water-derived power bear so great a proportion to the total as it does in Switzerland.

The main difference between British and Swiss methods is, that here we find it more convenient and economical to bring the fuel to the locality in which the power is to be actually utilised, whereas the Swiss engineer prefers to generate electricity wherever water-power is available, and then to convey the energy so obtained to more or less distant localities which, by reason of their surroundings, are found to be convenient for the absorption of the power for industrial purposes.

The foregoing remarks were suggested by a recent visit to a few of the electrical engineering works which abound in Switzerland, particularly the inspection of the power-station known as Kanderwerk, lately erected on the shores of the Lake of Thun, and of the electric railway between Thun and Burgdorf, which derives its motive-power from that source. The problem which has been successfully solved in this instance was that of utilising the power available from the river Kander, which rises in the Bernese Alps and falls into the lake near the village of Spiez, and of transmitting that power across distances of from six to thirty miles, where it is employed in the working of the Burgdorf-Thun Railway, and in supplying light and motive-power to the towns of Bern, Burgdorf, and Munsingen. An examination of the means adopted to achieve all this forms an instructive object-lesson on Swiss engineering skill.

The water-supply from the river is led for about one thousand yards in an open canal, for another thousand yards in a cement tunnel of elliptical section, and finally for about a mile in metal piping to the power-house. The water in its course falls through a height, measured vertically, of about two hundred feet, and flows at the average rate of from four to five millions of gallons per hour. The immense amount of energy contained in the water is then absorbed by means of turbines, which convert it into the mechanical energy of motion; the comparatively inert water being discharged into the lake.

At present there are four turbines, each capable of developing nine hundred horse-power, and their revolving shafts are coupled direct to the shafts of four large dynamo machines, by means of which the energy is once more transformed in character, this time to that so well adapted for transmission across large distances—namely, high-tension electricity of the particular class technically known as three-phase current. To the engineer familiar with the methods usually followed in this country for the generation of electrical power, the comparatively small power-house, with its four turbines and wheel-like dynamos, working with little noise save the hiss of the water and the slight hum of the dynamos,

contrasts in a marked degree with the large power-station and the steam-pipes, chimney-stack, and huge range of boilers necessary for the production of a similar amount of power; and when it is realised that the coal-bill is conspicuous by its absence, the wonder grows that the water-power of this country has hitherto only been utilised to such a limited extent.

Having extracted the energy of the falling water in the desired form, the next step is to convey it to the remote points at which it is required to produce light and motive-power. To do this it is necessary, on account of the distances to be traversed, to use high-pressure electricity; and as the pressure at which dynamo machines can be safely worked is limited, the next step consists in again transforming the current from the comparatively high pressure of four thousand volts to the enormously higher pressure of sixteen thousand volts. Under ordinary conditions in this country this pressure is never reached; and the care with which the operation has to be effected is indicated by the fact that the transformers are placed in isolated chambers and entirely surrounded with wire cages to obviate all risk of contact even with the framework surrounding the live wires, connection with which would, of course, mean instant death.

The actual conveyance of the power from the station to the points of consumption is carried out in a quiet and unostentatious manner, the conductors being composed of bare copper wire, attached somewhat after the manner of telegraph wires to porcelain insulators, which in turn are supported on iron or wood poles. Due warning of the danger of tampering with the wires is given to the public, in orthodox Swiss fashion, by labels fixed on the poles. To would-be suicides these high-tension wires would seem to offer a most convenient method of attaining their object; but apparently they do not find much favour in this respect.

The railway begins at a distance of about six miles from the power-station. It consists of an electrically-operated line carrying ordinary heavy passenger and goods wagons, which are built so as to be interchangeable with the standard rolling-stock of the neighbouring Swiss lines. The line extends between Thun and Burgdorf, a distance of about twenty-five miles, the high-tension conductors running approximately parallel throughout its length. At intervals of from one to two miles power is tapped off for supplying the locomotives through the medium of transformer-stations, where the pressure is once more altered, this time by a reduction to the safe working pressure of seven hundred and fifty volts. Consequent on the use of three-phase currents, three independent supplies have to be delivered to the locomotives. This is done by suspending over the centre of the track two hard-copper wires on which run two bow-shaped arms

hinged to the roof of the car; and these, by their sliding contact, collect current from the two overhead wires. The third supply is obtained from the rails on which the trains run, both rails and overhead wires being suitably connected to the seven hundred and fifty volt currents of the transformer-stations dotted along the line.

The locomotives for ordinary passenger traffic are in the form of motor-cars, or, as they are better known abroad, 'automobiles,' and consist of carriages with accommodation for sixty-six passengers, which are provided with the means of self-propulsion in the shape of two electric motors of one hundred and twenty horse-power each. In addition, there is also usually attached an ordinary carriage or trailer, with accommodation for seventy persons. These two carriages together make up the ordinary passenger train. For goods traffic and for holiday traffic, locomotives pure and simple are used. These, provided with motors of about three hundred horse-power, are employed in drawing rolling-stock of standard pattern and weight. There is thus no difficulty in transferring the rolling-stock on to any of the adjacent steam lines if desired.

The driving of the trains is controlled from a cab similar in appearance to that of an ordinary steam locomotive, save that the levers are used for manipulating electrical switches in place of steam-valves and reversing-links. The brakes are of the Westinghouse pattern, the compressed-air supply for them—which also, by the way, blows the whistles—being obtained from an air-compressor driven by a motor which takes its current from the overhead wires. The lighting and heating are also carried out electrically, the former again involving a transformation of the pressure from that of the line wires at seven hundred and fifty volts to the more convenient one of one hundred and twenty volts, at which it is supplied to the lamps.

The foregoing gives in brief outline the details of a scheme which is particularly illustrative of the use that may be made of the water-power running to waste in our rivers, which up to the present has been largely neglected. Undoubtedly the Swiss are particularly favoured in this respect. The volume of water in their streams is much greater than in ours, and, as a rule, the fall in level is much more rapid. In consequence, the cost of constructing the necessary hydraulic works is comparatively small. In addition, the construction of such works does not appear to offer the same interference with water-rights as appears to be the case in this country, and the consequent opposition of proprietors and local authorities is less in evidence than when any attempt is made to establish hydraulic-power

works in Great Britain. Such opposition was well exemplified in the case of the works established at Foyers some years ago, and of the Highland water-power development scheme introduced into parliament in the course of last session. When we consider the difficulty of successfully promoting such undertakings, and also the extremely cheap rates at which coal can be supplied in most parts of the country, it seems unlikely that in the immediate future there will be much opportunity for the British engineer to show his capabilities in this particular direction. So long as our coal-supply holds out, this of itself is of comparatively little importance, except to the engineer, who, striving after new fields of enterprise, chafes at the neglect of such splendid opportunities. Although there is little demand for such work here, the question is involved of the necessity for it in other countries, and it is on that account that our backwardness is much to be deplored.

With the opening up of new colonies by nearly all civilised nations—a movement which has developed so rapidly in recent years—there has occurred the foundation of many industries which depend on a cheap supply of motive-power. In new countries devoid of coalfields, or with these in an undeveloped condition, and as yet unprovided with railways for the cheap transport of fuel, water-power is naturally looked to as the cheapest and often the only possible means of carrying on their industries. The market which such a condition of matters is opening up promises to be of immense importance in the near future, and to involve the production of such large quantities of machinery as must form an appreciable portion of the total output of the world. It is to be feared, however, that, so far as long-distance transmission of power is concerned, the British engineer, by reason of the conditions above referred to, will have to take a secondary position; the engineers of those nations which have developed the system acquiring experience which gives them exceptional confidence and ability to do the work required.

It will be seen that the discouragement of such work at home not only results in the neglect of opportunities here, but tends to the loss of markets abroad for our enterprise. It is to be hoped, therefore, that in the future a more liberal spirit will be displayed in the consideration of water-power schemes, and that an industry which hitherto has been discouraged rather than fostered will be appreciated, not for the advantages it may confer on the individual promoters or the engineering community, but with a due regard to its share in upholding that industrial supremacy on which the prosperity of Great Britain is in a large measure dependent.



## THE SILVER LOTAH.

IN FOUR PARTS.—PART II.

**M**OONLIGHT, full in its midnight splendour, flooded Colonel Matthias's bedroom inch by inch, and crept across the matting. It swamped the bedside-table, and it covered the revolver upon it. It slanted to the bed, and laid a silver finger upon the sleeper's face. The Colonel awoke with a start.

He sat up, one hand upon the revolver; his eyes were ready for he knew not what. His sleep had been short and uneasy, disturbed by vague dreams of turmoil and bloodshed, and in his waking he became oppressed by a sense of danger. Then he remembered it all: the evening's interview, and his trust, and the strange old woman who had thrust herself upon him. How was she faring in the mysterious house behind the bamboo-hedge? And . . . Stop! Was the lotah safe?

He searched under his pillow and drew it out, rubbing his eyes as he looked at it. It was only a battered, quaint silver object. Now that he was wide awake, he gazed at it with incredulity, as if he no longer believed in the romance that the evening had given, and as if he were ready to declare that its value was only in the whim of a senile old barbarian. His sleep had broken between him and the impressions of the early darkness, and he had an impatience with himself for being so easily duped by his own imagination—or another's.

Still, there was a restless feeling, and he could not sleep again. He rose from his bed, holding the lotah in his hand, and walked into the moonlight to where, through the open door, he could see the swaying light and shade of the bamboos, and the gleam of a white roof beyond them. Looking back, he found amazement; he did not understand how he had been dragged into the meshes of Mrs Black's weird delusions.

The moonbeams glittered on the lotah, and recalled it to his mind. The rubies glowed as the light touched them. After all, it *might* be a charm of value in her forbidden country; it was certainly a curiosity: he knew his East, and there were less likely things.

He peered into the body of it. Something caught his eyes, as attention is attracted by a spot of shadow. He was looking down into the bowl of the vase, and he felt suddenly that his mind was seized and his gaze fixed by the black, empty interior—no bigger than that of a wine-glass—into which he looked. He could not move or speak or lift his eyes. He could only stare, fascinated by the blot of darkness inside the silver lotah.

The inky patch began to smoke and stir, like water in the depths of a cauldron; and Matthias

lost, for the time, all sense of proportion. He was no longer conscious that the blur at which he gazed was only the size of a crown-piece; he seemed to be looking at the face of a steaming pool of black liquid, and he saw, as he watched, the drift above it curl slowly away, and a scene form itself upon the lightening surface, and grow gradually clear to the vision. It shaped exactly as if he were looking through an opera-glass, and adjusting the focus from the first vague mist to a distinct outline.

The Colonel stood like a man of stone, his head bent and his hands curving about the silver lotah. The apparition within it grew plain to his eyes.

He saw a bedroom: a lofty room, with a white ceiling-cloth above and Eastern rugs and pillows scattered over the floor. It was lit by the moonlight that streamed through the open windows; beyond them the Colonel could see the rail of a balcony. A *charpoy* (the native string-bed) contrasted rudely with the ample proportions of the place, and there was a medley of splendour and tawdriness that told it was not a European's room. A massive bureau, carved deep in Bombay blackwood, stood side by side with a deal kitchen-chair; a gaudily-framed print from some illustrated paper hung upon the wall beside a stretch of costly *pardahs*, stiff with gold thread and rare embroidery. A hookah stood beside the bed, from which a quilt was tossed back as if the occupant had lain down and then risen again in restlessness.

So far the room had been empty, but now Matthias saw that somebody had entered from an inner door. He recognised—without the surprise that he should have felt—the face of Mrs Black, peering, uplifted lamp in hand, through a circle of yellow light. She came in, made as though she intended to lie down on the bed, and then started up and flitted away again through another door; a fevered, perturbed creature in whose every movement the Colonel read anxiety and foreboding.

How long the room remained empty Matthias could not have told, but it seemed only an instant before he saw a shadow start from the balcony, and a man spring to the interior. There was the gleam of a knife in his hand, and the quick, snake-like advance made Matthias watch him with apprehension. What was to follow?

The intruder stole across the room, and when he saw it was empty he began to turn over the bedclothes and push aside the curtains and scatter the trinkets on the dressing-table in an eager search. He worked with marvellous rapidity, prising open drawers, ferreting in pigeon-holes, and scanning their contents with an attention

that overlooked nothing. As he moved to and fro in the moonlight he proved to be a swarthy, lean-built half-caste, with eyes in which cruelty and evil shared equal place; and Matthias knew, without other telling, that he was looking upon the face of Nathoo.

Once, when he found what he thought to be the object of his search, the intruder darted to the window to see; and then, as he saw that it was not what he had hoped, he dashed it to the ground in anger. The scene was enacted in dumb-show to Matthias; but the next moment he saw a door open, and Alan Black appeared. Nathoo looked up, and their eyes met. Alan threw out his hands and staggered back, his weak face blanching with acute terror; and while he wavered Nathoo sprang towards him with the leap of a tiger, clutched him by the throat, and let the knife-hand swing. The Colonel saw the fierce thrust with which he sent his weapon home; he saw the fiendish expression with which he fixed the terrified eyes of the wounded man; and he saw the younger brother sink to his knees and fall, a huddled mass, into a pool of his own blood. The door behind him seemed to be burst open as the murderer disappeared, swiftly as he had come, beyond the balcony. And then Matthias felt the scene fade in a drift of vapour, and found himself gazing dizzily at no more than the empty lotah. The spell was broken.

Matthias stood rooted to the spot for a full half-minute, while his brain struggled slowly back to working power. There was a well-known Indian juggler's trick whereby a subject, looking into a blot of ink in a man's hand, became hypnotised by it, and saw strange things in its reflection. It was only to be believed that the silver lotah possessed, by what occult means the Colonel was unable to guess, the same mesmeric property. It was small wonder that the thing had been so jealously preserved, and that it bred trouble in the lust for its possession. It was no marvel, either, that to the man who held it accrued an authority less fortunate individuals might labour in vain to claim. But was the vision a flight of imagination, or was it the reflection of events that were happening elsewhere at the moment of gazing?

The Colonel loaded his revolver, dropped it into a pocket, and hurried into his clothes. He remembered Mrs Black's story with a thrill of conviction, and he was ready to swear that the lotah had shown him a portion of the drama that made the mystery of the white house. Murder had been done—once. What was to prevent its being done again?

Matthias ran hot-foot to the bamboo-hedge, threw himself against it, and pressed through in a haste that left his face scratched and his clothes in rags.

He found himself in Mrs Black's garden. A

door in the veranda yawned wide not thirty paces from him, and through it he raced into the house. A broad staircase, chequered with moonbeams, faced him, and he bounded up it to the second story, three steps at a time. There an open bedroom door invited him, and he found himself standing on the very threshold of the scene of the vision. The excitement of this quick answer to his conjecture had no surprise in it, but his pulses jarred at the mystery and at the tragedy before him.

Alan Black lay in the doorway, as the lotah had shown, knees huddled to chin, and fingers stiffening upon a star of blood-stained linen above his heart. Mrs Black knelt beside him, her eyes bent upon his face with an agony that had in it the fierce despair of a wild animal, and her hands clenched at her sides in a gesture of self-abandonment and grief. She was devouring his face with desperate looks, and her lips were moving in a dumb lament for the dead.

Matthias hesitated: the scene bit into his brain, in all its pitiful horror, with an intensity that was never to be forgotten. The old woman raised herself as he paused, and their eyes met across the body of her son.

'It has come!' she said in low-toned Hindustani. 'The lotah has claimed him. I feared. I fought; but I knew he was not strong enough for its possession. Where is Nathoo?'

There was such fury in the question that Matthias started.

'He has fled,' he said mechanically.

'Ay!' said the woman, and her fingers pointed to the dead man. 'He has fled from *that*, and from the curse that shall overtake him even now. He has killed my son, whom I would have set upon the throne; and he thinks to clutch at the lotah, and to hold it out for my people to honour him. But he shall not have it! No, he shall not have it! Give it to me.'

The Colonel drew it from his breast and handed it to her without a word. She flung herself upon the ground, and pressed the silver lotah against the dead man's blood-stained hand. Then she sprang to her feet again, and poured out a shrill torrent of speech:

'The blood of my son shall cry out against my son; the throne of my son shall renounce my son; the curse of my son's mother shall rest upon my son! He shall die like an outcast in the darkness; he shall never reach his desire; he shall fall into an open grave with no eye to weep for him, and with no mourner to cover his dead face. He shall perish in the jungles!'

She broke off with a shudder. Her figure became rigid, and her face, in mask-like stillness, bent over the empty lotah. For a long-drawn minute she stood there, hardly breathing, gazing with the stare of a seer at things unknown to the watcher, and then life returned slowly to her eyes. She looked up at Matthias; and

something in her expression, some current of subtle sympathy—who could tell if it came from the battered thing her hands caressed?—made him take a step towards her and stand expectant.

'Colonel sahib, it is needful, now that my son is dead, that I should send the silver lotah, which is the sign of sovereignty to my people, and which holds the power of which'—her eyes met his—'we two know something, to my kinsman, Uzr Khan. I, who would have thrust him off the *gaddi*, will now seat him securely upon it. I dare not keep the silver lotah longer; my day is past. And, seeing that the other is accursed and unworthy, and that I am but an old woman, it is time that the lotah went to clean and strong hands that will know best how to guard it. Do this thing for me.'

'What do you want?' asked Matthias.

'This only: and rest assured that I—and I was born a Khan's daughter—have not forgotten how to reward service. There is a horse in the stable, and there is a horse in waiting at Banôg and at Kijni. I had planned it all for Alan, that he should take the lotah and ride and ride and ride to the frontier, to meet his own men. Now I ask you to do it, and when you come to the border at Yusufghât, where are two men who will say that they are "the servants of the thing with many eyes"—she showed the rubies of the lotah—'do you give it

to them, saying that Uzr Khan's kinswoman renders homage to him.'

'It is thirty miles through the mountains to Yusufghât,' said Matthias. 'But I will go. I do not understand this matter; it seems to me as if some influence that has hold upon me will not let me refuse. Only—what of you? For all you know, Nathoo may be still in hiding here.'

'The silver lotah told you truth. Perhaps it tells me something too—who knows? Be assured, Colonel sahib; Nathoo is not here, nor will he return. Go now, before my servants find you here, where you can do no good, and keep you.'

She held up her finger to keep his words back, and he heard a confused murmur of voices drawing near through the garden. Matthias ran to the window to look, and he saw his friend, Rattray Carington the policeman, followed by an escort, approach the house under a watchman's guidance.

'You see?' She thrust the lotah into his hand, and dragged him towards a second staircase. 'Below you are the stables. Go swiftly, Colonel sahib, or the police *lôg* will find you.'

And the last thing that Matthias heard as his heels rattled down the staircase was the cheerful voice of Carington saluting Mrs Black with the quiet courtesy that meant—and it seemed fantastic in that tangle of strange circumstance—the assurance of British protection and authority.

## ESSENCE OF MATRIMONY: EUCALYPTUS BRAND.



STRALIA is the land of the eucalyptus, of course; and beneath the blue-gums was distilled the essence of matrimony here offered to the reader as 'eucalyptus brand.'

It may not be known to the average Britisher, accustomed to Nonconformist disabilities and to agitations for a change in the Marriage Act, that Australian Nonconformist ministers have a very free hand in this matter, as in many others in which the Church and the Government departments come into association. They are the custodians of the original duplicate of the marriage register; they are practically the registrars of the weddings they perform; and there are absolutely no vexatious preliminaries of any sort such as complicate the situation, or at least have complicated it hitherto, at home. A minister may be informed at 10 A.M. that a wedding is proposed, and at 12 noon the whole business may be settled without banns, without registrar, without notice, without the knowledge of more than five persons—namely, the bride and bridegroom, the two witnesses, and the minister himself. By a later post a copy of the register will be sent to the Registrar-General, and at the

quarter's end a return will be made of *all* weddings during the three months; but that is all. Though copious particulars are required by law, it is practically left entirely to the minister's judgment to see that no essential point is overlooked.

The purpose of this article, however, is not to descant upon the superior merits of the marriage laws in Australia, but to mention a few quaint aspects of the matrimonial relation as they arise from the occasionally unique conditions of Australian life. I remember, for instance, the case of a young miner who lived in a little valley—a very paradise of winding river and greensward and wattle bloom, but a hermit's cell for loneliness and isolation. His lady-love was more than thirty miles away, beyond the blue gums and the myrtles, on the other side of ranges three thousand feet high, and turbulent, bridgeless mountain-streams, with no means of communication between save a bush-track three feet wide, with a blazed line here and there on the trees and a rugged arrow carved with a tomahawk at the turn-off to keep the faithful swain upon the track. But still, like the frog of our childhood's legend, he 'would a-wooing go,' unappalled by bush solitudes, by perils of waters or wilderness, or by the fatigues



of cross-country travelling. To change considerably the old song,

The rivers they have locked the door,  
The mountains keep the key;  
But neither range nor flood shall part  
My own true love and me.

In this case love laughed, not at locksmiths, but at milestones; and so the ardent wooer rode once a fortnight or so, on a sturdy mountain pony, from Saturday at noon to far on into Saturday night, while the bright Australian moon shone through arches of stringy bark and groves of old-man fern, and the mopehawk cried his dismal cry, and the supper-seeking opossum scratched and squeaked in the giant gums. Then he returned early on Monday morning, before the snakes awoke to rustle in the long rank grass, or the bush-rat and the wallaby began the active duties of the day. When at last I went to marry this devoted couple I had to ride even farther than the bridegroom—though on a better road, where I should at least meet a man or two, and have the crowning excitement of waving my greeting to old Dan Walsh the coachman, as he flung the dust off his dashing four-horse team into my eyes in passing. My journey, that is to say, was fifty miles each way, with lunch in my pocket, and marriage register—cased in oilskin to keep it dry—at my saddle-bow. For 'happy is the bride that the sun shines on,' and rare, too, in that rainy region.

As a matter of fact I wanted several lunches before the journey ended, and it became nearer one hundred and fifty miles than one hundred before I had finished; the wedding was twenty-four hours late, and the guests had departed when the minister arrived, haggard and wan and hungry after a night out in the bush with his saddle for a pillow. But that is another story.

When the wedding was over, however, the couple went for their honeymoon in rather a unique fashion, not much in vogue in England though fairly common in Australia—that is to say, the bride found honeymoon enough in mounting a horse and riding beside her husband to his home through the bush he had so often travelled alone. How the old track must have been glorified at last! And perhaps even the laughing jackass grew a shade less flippant than usual, and the ruminating kangaroo wondered to behold a lady's hack beside the hitherto unattended mountain pony. At any rate, they settled down in a disused schoolhouse from which all but two or three boys and girls had emigrated with their parents for richer mineral treasures. There, in the little isolated glen, with three other women for sole neighbours, and ten or a dozen men to pay her homage, settled this bright young woman, who could sing and play and paint, and who had been half over the world with her father before he came to mine in another part of that lonely province. The little river sparkled and sang by the

door of her dainty home; but her eyes were often on a three-foot track that wound up and up and up the gully, looking for a mailman who wound down and down and down, bringing on a one-eyed mule the bag that held her weekly letter from home. It was she, and not the man this time, who obeyed the Scriptural injunction to 'leave father and mother' and cleave unto 'the beloved.' But in a settlement of less than thirty people, hemmed in by mountains, the situation had its drawbacks, and the voluntary exile was more heroic than usual.

Turn we now to an entirely different case, which must be given here with some degree of vagueness, lest it hurt the susceptibilities of some who have bidden farewell to prodigal sons in England, and lost them in the long silences of Australian self-expatriation. One day there came to me a man who described himself as a private secretary and bookkeeper. He was tipsy, and consequently cordial and friendly, and he informed me with sundry oaths and winks that his people were 'up to the knocker' in the old land. 'But as for me,' he hiccuped out, 'I'm a wastrel, a good-for-nothing. I'd like,' he added after a moment, 'to see my old dad again; but I'll have to turn over a new leaf, I reckon, if I do.' And then, with sudden vehemence: 'By God, parson, I wish I could!'

I did not know where he lived then, but I found him afterwards at a wayside inn—a place where, for certain reasons, his penmanship and his educational attainments generally were worth sundry drinks of whisky, a bed in an attic room, and such meals as he had appetite to eat between his drinking-bouts. But he was a byword with his few neighbours, a scoffing with the stable-boy, and a reproach to his British ancestry and his gentle upbringing. He came into my town every week or two, and reeled out again, a maudlin specimen of manhood, degraded and debauched.

But behold, as the days went by, a change, and at each visit the man more and more 'clothed and in his right mind.' The details are too numerous for the scope of this article. Suffice it that there was a woman in the case. 'Only a barmaid,' as we say, but she accomplished something of at least outward reform in that wreck of a man, that 'slouch,' known contemptuously by his Christian name with the few Toms, Dicks, and Harrys of his isolated little town. He came to me to marry him, but he could not pay the fee. It was two guineas then, or even three if we chose; but for his sake as well as my own I would not abate one penny of the smaller sum. Of course he had not two guineas in the world, and scarce a decent suit to be married in; and I confess that when he asked to be married on trust and offered a dirty one-pound note as a deposit I had no faith in him whatever.

However, he was desperately in earnest, and I grew not only willing to marry him, but anxious

to see the woman who had nerved him up to the task. 'Some coarse, dashing person,' I said to myself, 'who has appealed to the other side of his passions.' But when she came I found I had done them both a grievous injustice. She was handsome, it is true, but in a quiet, womanly way. No dash, no coarseness, and—what made me marvel most—she evidently had learned to respect this ex-slouch, and had taught him to respect himself. I started when he filled in the column covering 'Father's Name and Occupation,' for this was it: 'Henry Blank, Master of Arts, vicar of —, England.' A slouch, a barmaid, and a Master of Arts! And—strange mystery of love, strange romance of social paradox!—the 'slouch' was more nigh of kin morally to the vicar through the barmaid than he had ever been before. I verily believe his self-respect came back, for he sent me the balance of his wedding-fee soon afterwards, with a note of thanks and this remark about his wife: 'She's making a new man of me, and of course a *better* one.'

Ah, well! one is thankful for even the small mercies of human influence for good; and I could only pray that husband and wife might together find Him who can change within and without the worst 'slouch' that ever hung round a bar-room or drank the dregs of other men's beer and the dregs of degradation together out of a pewter pot.

The incidents given above occurred in Australia proper. But there is a 'tight little island' on the other side of Bass Strait where the marriage fees do not go into the circuit exchequer, as in Australia, but are the perquisites of the minister himself. So far as the comparative scarceness of women at first in the mining settlements will permit, the minister is given many opportunities of charging a respectable fee to unite together two persons in 'the holy estate of matrimony.' One instance may be given typical more or less of life in general on the pioneer fields in that land of little outside notoriety but of great mineral wealth. Similar features of civilisation—or want of civilisation, one ought perhaps to say—no doubt exist in Klondyke and Johannesburg, and—in a peculiar sense and on a larger scale—in Western Australia; but perhaps no country is richer in pioneer life of a certain sort than little 'Tassy,' with its great Bischoff tin-field, and its Zeehan silver, and its Mount Lyell conglomerate, and a host of little properties that promise to be bigger by-and-by.

It was on the west coast of this island that I was stationed in a climate where, as in the former case, the minister's first concern about his marriage register was how to keep it dry; for oftentimes the rains descended and the floods came and beat upon that register, and the minister plodding wearily over the corduroy, in thigh leggings and hob-nailed boots, had much ado to keep intact the entries of those who had entered the marriage state. At last the problem was solved by unbinding the register entirely, putting a few copies

of the papers, carefully wrapped in oilskin, into an inner pocket, and so carrying them about on every occasion. For the place was a paradox in the matter of marriages, as will be seen when its conditions are described. There were, both in the town itself and scattered over the forest, the quarries, and the railway construction works, a great many navvies and miners, mostly young or middle-aged; but very few old men, women, or children. Though, for entirely different reasons to those which characterised Jerusalem, the place was still in need of the promise that there should be men in it leaning on their staffs for very age, and that 'the streets of the city should be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.' The married men usually came first, to establish a new home, leaving their wives and children in the old one for months, sometimes it might be for years, and sending them notes or a money-order every fortnight when the wages were paid. Most of the men lived in huts or tents, and only a few bachelors could possibly go courting, because there were so few maidens to court. No sylvan groves for them to meet in there, save desperately muddy ones; no lovers' walks, except along a railway survey strewn with *débris*, or a main street of slippery corduroy. No rustic seats there 'for talking age or whispering lovers made.' Besides the unusual privilege of being one of the favoured few, a young man had to face the unusual difficulty of persuading a woman to share his lot in a two-roomed paling-hut, or to build her a little weather-board house on expensive terms, where timber was dear and a builder's wages high, and a building-site was hard to get.

One day in this township I met a man who paused in front of me.

'Are you the Wesleyan minister?' he asked.

'Yes.'

'Well, then, I was coming to see you. The fact is, you—I mean I—oh, you know, I want to get married.'

'Indeed,' I said. 'When and where?'

'To-day at one o'clock.'

'Is the bride of age?'

'No; but her father will be there, and I s'pose that'll be enough consent.'

'Yes, or at any rate he can sign a paper then. Where is the ceremony to be?'

'Down at my place at the fifteen-mile.'

'Very well,' I said, 'I will be there. I've an errand up the township; then I'll come along.'

My errand up the township was also about a wedding. I had been called in early that morning to marry a young couple. In this case, too, the bride was a minor; but her father's consent had not been obtained, for the very sufficient reason that his daughter had not seen or heard of him for years. Her mother, too, was missing. Yet neither of her parents was dead. What was to be done? The man had got a morning's holiday expressly to be married, and must go 'on

shift' at one o'clock. There was no J.P. within twenty-six miles, and the nearest Police Commissioner was the same distance away. Yet the couple insisted they must be married that day. Luckily there was a telegraph-office not more than two miles off. Thither I sped and sent a telegram direct to the Registrar-General: 'R. S. wants to marry minor. Father and mother both living, but whereabouts unknown. No magistrate here. Can wedding go on?'

In less than an hour back came reply from Hobart to the effect that if I was satisfied of the facts there would be no objection. So the couple were married in a little scrap of a bedroom adjoining the long dining-room of the boarding-house in which the bride was a waitress. She dressed first, then came out and went about her work whilst the bridegroom put some finishing touches to his toilet in the same room. Then both went about their business whilst I wrote the necessary triplicate copies of the register—still in the same room. Shortly after, the happy pair came back with two witnesses; and, whilst the great boarding-house dinners frizzled and spluttered in the kitchen near by, and half-a-dozen loungers talked loudly in the long bare dining-hall just through the partition, I read the passage about 'the presence of God and this congregation;' and, though I always endeavour to read the service with due solemnity, I fear that the thought of earlier days in West London which flitted through my mind made me half-conscious that matrimony in a ten feet by eight feet skillion was scarcely so imposing as some other weddings that society hears of and attends in state. As to 'boast of heraldry or pomp of power,' the bride could not give her father's address and did not know her mother's maiden name!

The ceremony was over at last, and, as the honoured guest of the occasion—and the only one, for the witnesses had gone, one to her wash-tub and the other to his charcoal-kiln—I was sumptuously regaled with Irish stew and rice-pudding; a smelter hand in his shirt-sleeves on my left, a woodcutter with a blasphemous tongue on my right, and a butcher's journeyman opposite me. The bride, listening impassively to various none too tactful remarks and compliments, waited upon us all. The bridegroom had already gone 'on shift.'

Then I trudged down the line to the other wedding. It was a long tramp of nearly eleven miles, I suppose. When I reached the dwelling of the bride's parents—a paling-hut with a shingle roof—I found a padlock on the door and no one at home but a tortoise-shell cat, which sat in the little square window licking its paws. I have since wondered whether it had sampled up the meat provided for the wedding feast. After I had sat waiting on a tree-stump for some time, a ballast-truck came along, and a man leaped out, helped a stout woman to alight, then gave his hand to a tall, rosy-faced girl, about twenty, as I thought her then; but to my astonishment,

when she signed the register—for this was the bride, you know—she was only fifteen. The bride of the morning was seventeen, and a week later I married a girl of eighteen to a man of twenty-eight. The present bridegroom was seven or eight years older than the bride.

Ten minutes after the arrival of the ballast-truck I sat within the hut writing out the registers from an egg-cup ink-pot. The bride was dressing in the next room, with a curtain only, not a partition even, between the officiating minister and herself. The bridegroom had been ready before, and sat quietly smoking outside. He requested me to make the ceremony as short as possible, as he wanted to 'get a bit of something to eat and back to work by three o'clock.'

Soon the bride came out. Where she learned to dress so tastily I do not know; but if she had been married in Mayfair both her dress and her looks would have fitted the occasion. The ceremony was performed in a house on the other side of the cutting. We climbed to it, bride and all, up a greasy hill, on steps of old-man fern coated with mud and gravel; and after the signing of the register we returned by the same path and had the 'wedding breakfast' at the hut. It consisted of ham and bread-and-butter, and as an appetiser the bride's mother made tea in a large pewter pot, and served it up to us with condensed milk in blue enamelled mugs. Then the hut door was locked behind us all; the bride, with her mother, went to her new home three miles farther down the line, and the bridegroom, catching the next ballast up-train, returned to work. There had been but one hitch in the ceremony. That was when the bride, asked to say 'according to God's holy ordinance,' said instead 'according to God's holy audience.' I wondered if she thought it meant the audience of father, mother, and minister then present. There was, however, as a lady has since reminded me, a subtle suggestiveness in the variation.

'We do marry to please the audience in these days,' she said half-sadly. 'But,' she added, 'whether it's a holy audience is another matter.'

After all, I don't think that little *lapsus lingue* has much application to the eucalyptus brand of matrimony. It would have more significance, perhaps, at a certain distillery in Hanover Square.

#### TO 'FAIRY-FINGERS.'

LINES WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM.

FAIRY-FINGERS, made to bless,  
Made to smooth, with sweet caress,  
Scars of sorrow's deep impress,  
Time's sign-manual of distress,  
From some souls else comfortless;  
Made that this world's toil and stress  
May, with less of bitterness,  
On the hearts that love thee press:  
Fairy-fingers, made to bless.

JULIA M. A. HAWKESLEY.





# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### CHINESE COOKS.

**I**F there is one sphere of European domestic life in which, more than another, the Chinaman finds scope for the exercise of his own peculiar ingenuity, without doubt it is in the regions dedicated to the pursuit of the culinary art. Here he will allow no obstacle to daunt him, no unforeseen contingency to catch him unawares. Should you, having ordered two chops for the dinner of yourself and your wife, suddenly, all unthinking, bring in a friend to share your humble meal, you will find the cook, out of two chops, has miraculously created a third—created it so skilfully out of odds and ends of meat deftly strung together that only the practised eye may discern the difference. Should you have forgotten to order the milk, or the fish, these commodities will, nevertheless, appear on your table. If you are indiscreet enough to inquire where they came from, you will be told they are borrowed from next door.

The following reminiscences, all culled from the regions of absolute fact, will further illustrate this happy knack of triumphing over adverse circumstances:

Mrs Brown and Mrs Jones were neighbours, and lived in semi-detached houses. Mrs Brown, on taking possession a year before, had fitted out her kitchen with everything requisite for the preparation of the daily meals. At the end of the year the Browns decided to move. On going into their new house, Mrs B. was met by a request from the cook for a fresh outfit. She asked what was required, and was told everything. This appeared inexplicable, for, in addition to entertaining largely during the last few months, she had several times replaced various articles which had got lost or broken. The cook still insisted he had nothing to cook with. 'But, cook,' said Mrs Brown, 'what have you been doing the last few months? What did you cook with?' 'Oh,' replied John Chinaman quite calmly, 'I have borrow from next door.' And so he had.

Mrs Green and Mrs Black, also neighbours and

close friends, were fond of dropping in on each other and unbosoming themselves of all their little domestic worries. One afternoon, when Mrs Green was dwelling upon the difficulty she had in getting her cook to understand that dishes should be wiped with a clean cloth instead of any old, dirty rag which came to hand, Mrs Black suddenly exclaimed, 'Oh! that reminds me. I want to see my cook for a moment.' The bell was rung, and the cook sent for, but seemed very reluctant to come into the drawing-room. When at last he had been persuaded to do so, Mrs Green, after looking at him for a moment, said, 'Why, that's *my* cook!' It turned out that the astute gentleman was cook for both establishments, and no doubt often contrived to provide for both from the provisions ordered by one, greatly to his own pecuniary benefit.

Mrs White determined, in the first flush of her newly-wed dignity, that she was not going to be 'squeezed' by the cook and the storekeeper, as it was quite plain every one else was. Accordingly she purchased scales and weights, and announced her intention of personally weighing everything. For some days this method proved very satisfactory; but she was sometimes a little puzzled on finding that the provisions occasionally weighed more than was charged for. One day the mystery was solved. She was carefully weighing a chicken. In China not only is everything, living and dead, sold by weight, but fowls are always supplied alive. The chicken during the weighing operation suddenly entered a vigorous objection, and began to flap and struggle with all its might; and during these flappings and strugglings something weighty fell with a thud to the floor, evidently from somewhere about the chicken. This turned out to be a large piece of lead, which had been cunningly fastened under one of the wings. Further investigation led to the discovery of a similar piece underneath the other wing. The overweight of the past few days was now accounted for. Mrs White has modified her original resolution, and

the scales only justify their existence by recording the weekly increase in the weight of the baby.

Miss Gray is the matron of one of our local hospitals, and from long residence in the colony understands Chinese. Sitting at her window one day, she overheard a good deal of chattering going on between a stranger servant and the hospital cook. As far as she could make out, the stranger wished to borrow something which the cook was unwilling to lend. At length the importunities of the stranger appeared to prevail, and the desired loan was effected; the cook giving a parting injunction to the stranger to be sure and bring the article back very quickly, as it was wanted for the hospital dinner. Her suspicions being aroused, Miss Gray stopped the stranger as he was going away with something very evidently concealed beneath his ample coat. The man at first denied that he had borrowed anything, but, being hard pressed, at length confessed and brought out a parcel. On making further search, the contents of the parcel were found to be the meat destined to make the soup for the hospital patients. The stranger, who was cook to a gentleman living in the neighbourhood, had forgotten to get any meat for soup, and had therefore appealed to his brother *chef* to lend him the hospital meat, so that he might make soup therewith for his master, and then return it to the hospital to make soup for the patients.

Many little ways, indeed, has the Chinese cook which are calculated to make cold shivers run

down the back of the English housewife. The sooner you master the principle that his methods of cooking are not to be too closely inquired into the greater your peace of mind. When you are reconciled to the ordinary amount of 'squeezing,' to a certain amount of dirt, and to a blissful ignorance of the inner details of his craft, then you will find that, after all, the Chinese cook is an extraordinarily useful fellow. If he makes your stores disappear with amazing celerity, yet he can create a substantial meal out of the slightest materials and on a moment's notice. He is easily taught and readily masters a new recipe. He can cook rice in such a masterly fashion that it will come out of the pot pure white, each grain separate and distinct from the other. Always up at daylight, no bell has ever to be rung to arouse him from his slumbers. With a few earthen *chatties* as his implements, over an open hearth, he can turn out a dinner which would not disgrace a restaurant.

What does it matter if he occasionally cooks his heathen messes in the pots and pans soon to be used for your dinner? You, not knowing it, are none the worse. He is unable to understand your desire for cleanliness; yet, to save trouble, he will gratify you to a reasonable extent.

If you only let him reasonably alone and give him a little encouragement in the matter of new recipes, you will find that many an English family served by an autocratic and highly-paid certificated Englishwoman are not much better off than you with your Chinese cook.

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

### CHAPTER XXV.—REVELATIONS.

**T**HE following day we steamed gaily into the harbour at Noumea, and before any official boat could put off to us, our own boat was carrying Denise and myself to the shore.

We were met there by some of the port officials, and Denise's explanations of her relationship to the Governor elevated us at once to the position of privileged persons, for whom the ways were to be made smooth and the paths cleared of all obstructions.

We went at once through the dusty, deserted, sun-baked streets to the Governor's residence, and requested audience of him. We were shown into a drawing-room, which, with its gilt mirrors and polished floor, was just a bit of France transported overseas, and here we had to wait a considerable time while his Excellency dealt with some official business.

But he came in at last, with many apologies for the delay, and gave us very hearty welcome. He was a tall, strapping fellow, a Breton every

inch of him, and a most polished and courtly gentleman.

He led us out on to the wide veranda, and installed us comfortably in creaking basket chairs; and a servant placed a marble-topped round table in the midst of us, and proceeded to cover it with various cooling drinks. His Excellency insisted on my trying one of his cigars, and then turned gaily to my wife.

'Well, Cousin Denise, this is as unexpected as it is delightful. How many years is it since we met? Let me see; it was down in Picardy, was it not?'

'Yes, at Belmaison. I wonder you remember. I was a mere child.'

'But remarkable even then,' bowed M. le Gouverneur, with a beaming smile. 'What a charming old lady the Princess is!'

'Was,' corrected Denise. 'She died over six months ago, just before I left Paris.'

'Dear, dear! I heard nothing of it,' he said, with a face full of sympathy. 'And to whom did Belmaison go?'

'With the rest, I suppose, to her grandson, Polignac.'

'Ah, Polignac is a black sheep, and Belmaison will be converted into a racing-stable and a *café chantant*. The pity of it! And you are married and settled down in life, *ma cousine*! *Tiens*! how the time flies! I shall begin to search for gray hairs next.'

'In yourself?' said Denise.

'Of course—in myself. One could never associate gray hairs with anything so charming as Mademoiselle Denise des Comptes, or even Madame Hugh Lamont. And have you ever succeeded in arriving at our exact degree of cousinship—eighth, was it not?'

'Sometimes it was eighth, sometimes sixteenth. It depended on circumstances, if I remember rightly.'

'That was so, I remember,' he said, laughing. 'And how long are you going to favour us, Monsieur Lamont? That is a very fine boat of yours. I noticed her as she came in this morning. You came all the way in her?'

'All the way, your Excellency. She is a capital sea boat.'

'It was surely an unusually long voyage for so small a craft. I should prefer something larger myself,' he said, with a humorous shrug. 'I am Breton born, it is true, but my life has unfortunately lain away from the sea.'

In spite of the pleasantness of his welcome and the lightness of our talk, there was a sense of discomfort among us, and M. de la Rocherelle faced the fact at last with the question:

'You have come to ask for Gaston. I have done what I could; but it has not been possible to do much. Nor, indeed, would he permit it.'

'You do not believe him guilty, Cousin Godefroi?' asked Denise.

'I could not believe Gaston des Comptes guilty of anything dishonourable,' he said; 'but I am here simply to administer the laws of the colony, and I may not alter them to suit either my wishes or my beliefs.'

'There has been a ghastly miscarriage of justice in this matter,' I said, 'and it is an innocent man you keep imprisoned here, your Excellency.'

'I am quite ready to believe that, M. Lamont; but what can I do? Paris sent him here, and here he must stop until Paris releases him—unless, indeed,' he said, with a lift of the eyebrows at me, 'he escapes.'

'He will never escape,' said Denise vehemently.

'Very well—then'—and another shrug intimated that in that case Gaston would have to stay where he was.

'Shall I be allowed to see him?' asked Denise.

'Oh, we will arrange that,' he said; 'but it will be better to do it unofficially. We shall walk up past the settlement, and we can drop into Gaston's hut. Shall we say to-morrow? How long do you stay, M. Lamont?'

'I can hardly say, your Excellency. My wife's wishes will be mine.'

'What news have you from home, Cousin Godefroi?' asked Denise.

'There is nothing of consequence. There were rumours of trouble of some kind among the Staff at headquarters'—

'Ah!' said Denise. 'What was that about?'

'I'm sure I don't know. The references were so slight, and only in the Opposition journals. There was probably no more truth in them than there generally is in rumours of the kind.'

'I wonder if you could lend us some of your latest papers, cousin; we have had no Paris news for months.'

'With greatest pleasure. Excuse me a moment, and I will get you a bundle of such as I have.'

'I wonder if there is anything in that?' said Denise eagerly when he had left the room.

'We will see when we get the papers.'

His Excellency returned with a bundle of the latest Paris papers he had received, with many apologies for their age, and the promise of some later ones in a few days.

'There's a mail overdue,' he said, 'and it may arrive any day. Now will you favour me with your company to dinner to-morrow night? It is an official dinner, and the members of my staff and their wives will be here. It will give you the chance of seeing what the society of Noumea is like. It is not over-stimulating,' he said, with a shrug, 'and I shall be glad of an alternative.'

We promised to come, and rowed back to the ship with our treasure-trove.

We studied those papers closely during the afternoon. The hints and rumours were there, indeed, as the Governor had said; and to us, with our special knowledge of certain matters, they possessed a significance which was, of course, withheld from him.

The rumours—all, of course, in the papers of the Opposition; the Government organs were discreetly silent, up to the date of the last paper we had—hinted at discoveries and discrepancies at the War Office which the officials were strenuously endeavouring to keep dark, but which the editors of these papers promised to drag to the light of day, in the interests of truth and their own side. No names were mentioned, but there were hints of defalcations, peculations of secret service funds, abscondings, and so on; and Denise, after breathlessly reading out every word on the subject, looked up at me with glowing face, and said, 'Oh! I wish we had the next week's papers. Don't you see, Hugh, all this points to Colonel Lepard and Captain Zuyler. At the time these things were written their disappearance was causing talk in official circles. Then would come suspicion, then inquiries, then domiciliary visits and seizures of papers and effects. Surely among them would be found something pointing to the truth. They could not have destroyed everything



bearing on the matter, and such a very little thing might put them on the right track.'

'The cleverest man generally overlooks something when he sets out to destroy evidence,' I said; 'and we certainly did not give the Colonel much time to think about things.'

'I wish we had those next papers,' she said.

Very early next morning, as I stood in the bows while Jim Barrett played on me refreshingly with the hose—for bathing in those waters held more risks than inducements—his aim fell suddenly askant, and my bracing douche went splashing over the rail.

'Steady, Jim, my man,' I said; 'aim straight.'

'Beg pardon, sir. Here's something coming, and she took my eye.'

I turned and saw a steamer coming slowly up the bay—a Government dispatch-boat, bringing, no doubt, the tardy mails. She was evidently crippled, but was well handled, and ran to her moorings, brought up there, and dropped a boat for the shore with all the precision of the service and much practice.

Denise came up presently to look at her, all eagerness to go ashore and procure papers; and Vaurel, leaning on the rail alongside us, gave us his ideas on those we had passed on to him the night before when we had done with them, and which he had been studying ever since.

'They've tumbled to him, ma'm'selle,' he said, 'as sure as guns. Everything they say, though they don't say it very straight, points to Colonel Lepard. They'll think he's bolted, and they'll root things up; and they're bound to come across something sooner or later, and then the truth will come out. Hello, what's this?'

This was a steam-launch coming foaming along towards us, with a curl of white spray at her bows, a big tricolor streaming out astern, and shrill whistles flying ahead of her to attract our attention.

'His Excellency's launch,' I ventured.

'With news for us!' said Denise, full of excitement.

'His Excellency himself, unless I am mistaken,' I said again, as a tall figure in uniform stood up in the stern and waved guily to us.

'Good news!' gasped Denise; and the launch curved in to the gangway, and the Governor came quickly up the steps.

'News?' said Denise, meeting him with all her heart in her eyes.

'The best of news,' he said. 'May we go below?'

We went down, and Vaurel followed. The Governor glanced at him inquiringly, and then recognised him.

'What! Vaurel?' he said, and shook him by the hand. 'Where did we meet last, my friend?'

'Gravelotte, Excellency,' said Prudent, drawing himself up and saluting.

'Gravelotte it was,' said His Excellency, 'and a hot time we had of it.'

He was opening up a number of papers, and now handed one in an official envelope to Denise.

'I could not let you wait a moment for this, cousin,' he said, 'so I brought it myself.—The papers I have hardly looked at, but I see they are full of it;' and he handed a number of journals to Vaurel and me.

But I knew that the letter Denise was reading was the kernel of the whole matter, and I was watching her.

The tears were streaming down her cheeks, and she had to dash them from her eyes once or twice in order to finish reading; then I heard her murmur, 'My God, I thank thee!' and she fell on her knees by the saloon table, and hid her face in her hands.

I picked up the letter and looked at M. de la Rocherelle. He nodded, and I read the letter through. It was addressed to himself, and was signed by the President of the Republic. It ran:

'M. LE GOUVERNEUR,—As the result of an inquiry into the affairs and papers of an officer of the General Staff, Colonel Lepard—full particulars concerning whom you will find in the accompanying documents—it is certain that in the matter of Captain Gaston des Comptes, condemned for treason, and presently a prisoner in your hands, a grave mistake has been made. From the absconder's papers it is proved beyond doubt that the accusation on which Captain des Comptes was condemned was a false accusation, concocted by the officer above named and another to serve their own ends.

'I require you, therefore, immediately on receipt of this letter, to release Captain des Comptes, and to inform him of these facts.

'You will procure for him a passage back to France with the least possible delay, and will treat him meanwhile in the way which your own good sense will dictate under the circumstances.

'You will further convey to Captain des Comptes the profound regret of France at the undeserved injury, humiliation, and suffering unwittingly inflicted on an innocent and honourable man, and the assurance that his country will not be slow to make such amends as may be in her power.'

I bent and kissed the back of Denise's neck, which was the only available spot, and, at a nod of permission from the Governor, passed the letter on to Vaurel; but he had got the gist of it from the journals already, and his big face was ablaze with excitement as he turned again to the journal spread out on the table in front of him, and pointed to a certain place in it where, bending with him, I read the following announcement:

'The evasion of the defaulter, Lepard, is causing the Government the gravest anxiety. To-night a reward of one hundred thousand francs is offered for information which may lead to his apprehension. How skilfully his plans have been laid,

however, is proved by the fact that since Colonel Lepard left Paris in the early morning of 16th August, all trace of him has been lost. It was believed that he had gone down into Bretagne, to Cour-des-Comptes, near Rennes; but no trace of him can be discovered there, and the police are wholly at fault. It is useless stating the various rumours which place the absconder at once in America, Brazil, Japan, and, of course, London. It is hoped, however, that the reward mentioned may have the effect of bringing news of him from no matter where, and if only the authorities can lay hands upon him they will ask no questions and pay prompt cash.

'There is a fortune for some one,' murmured Vaurel.

'For M. Prudent Vaurel,' I replied, and he murmured '*Mon dieu! mon dieu!*'

When Denise rose from her knees her face was radiantly happy.

'And Gaston?' she asked of the Governor.

'He is at my house awaiting you. I went for him myself instantly, and then came at once for you. I did not tell him you were here, however. This good news,' he said, tapping the President's letter, 'was enough at a time. You will be able to announce yourself.'

'We will go at once,' she said, and went to her cabin.

'I wonder where Lepard can have got to?' said his Excellency. 'I see they are offering a big sum for him. He knows too much, I expect, for them to feel safe till they get him into their hands again.'

Vaurel was like to burst with his information. He looked at me, but I doubt if he could have held it in a moment longer.

'We have him on board here, M. le Gouverneur,' he said, drawing himself up and saluting again.

'What?' shouted the Governor, with a jump that tumbled his cocked hat on to the floor. 'Lepard—here? How in Heaven's name do you come to have him here?—Is it true, Monsieur,' he asked, turning to me, 'or is our friend Vaurel gone cracked with the good news?'

'It is quite true,' I said, 'and Vaurel there is entitled to the reward. It was he who brought him on board in the Bay of Biscay in an open boat.'

'You are sure it is he? There is no mistake?'

'There is no mistake,' I said. 'We knew it was his wickedness that sent Gaston here; and he has other matters to answer for also. Come and you shall see him. Do you know him by sight, M. le Gouverneur?'

'Yes, I know him, but I never associated much with him. There was something about him I did not like.'

## THE WEAVING OF 'TURKEY' CARPETS IN DONEGAL.

By MARY GORGES.



AMONG Irish industries now at work there is one which was established not much more than a year ago; but already it shows great results, and promises even greater. This industry—the making of 'Turkey' carpets in Donegal—originated in the simple observation made by certain manufacturers of artistic textiles, when on tour in Donegal, that here, in one of the wildest, grandest, but also most barren parts of Ireland, hand-labour was plentiful, and only applied to the well-nigh impossible task of winning a bare subsistence from land often little better than rock or bog, while the latent cleverness of the people, and the quickness of brain and deftness of touch which they undoubtedly possess, were absolutely wasted. In such qualities these gentlemen recognised a vein of wealth, so exactly did they seem to meet the requirements of an undertaking in contemplation at the time, the success of which must depend, not alone on sufficiency of hand-labour, but on just such natural intelligence to supplement it. Thus inspired, they resolved on the experiment of establishing a place at Killybegs for the making of hand-tufted carpets of the description known as Turkish or Persian. This done, they gathered in the young

people of the district, and set them to a work of which I have been permitted to see the following graphic account:

'The peculiarity of this fabric'—hand-tufted carpets—'is that from its nature it must be a hand production. The tufts, or "mosaics of small woollen squares," as William Morris calls them, are tied by the fingers in knots into longitudinal warps, which are stretched between two long parallel beams. The carpets are made of any size or shape to suit any room. The design is placed in front, and the girls—from three to a dozen, according to the size of the carpet—select the colours indicated, row by row; these are tied, then bound down by "shoots" of woollen weft drawn across the entire width, and beaten firm by small iron-toothed hammers. Individual skill and workmanship come largely into play; and it is an industry peculiarly suited to the rural districts of Ireland, for no steam-power is required, and there is, therefore, no handicap on the commercial side from the absence of coal; while, the production being necessarily slow, a large proportion of the ultimate value comes from the labour. The fact of these carpets being hand-tufted has its charm in that stamp of individuality and irregularity which no power-loom can give.

The manufacturers who have undertaken this venture make many varieties of carpeting by power-loom, and it was owing to strong demand from high-class customers over the world for a production of a more individual character that they were led to resort to this primitive method of weaving. The difference between a carpet produced in this way and the ordinary smoothly-shaven power-loom production is much the same as that between an oil painting and a coloured lithograph; and with the increase of good taste and wealth the demand for the genuine daily grows. The method requires human thought in the process; it is, therefore, an industry which cannot be superseded by power-loom, and can only be approached by mechanism of a highly complicated and uneconomical sort. Indeed, it is this individual art character which has kept the Persian and Turkey carpets in steady demand for hundreds of years, and more so now than ever; and the appreciation of it which led William Morris to establish hand-tuft carpets and tapestry looms at Hammersmith twenty to thirty years ago. These Donegal carpets are of similar weave and character.

Visitors to the textile department at the Dublin Horse Show in August of last year were much surprised and pleased by the beautiful display of Donegal 'Turkey' carpets to be seen in the three rich subdued colours of those Eastern fabrics, so exactly reproduced as to present absolutely no difference externally; and we were assured that the colours were as unfading, the texture as impervious to wear, as in the original Eastern carpets; and, indeed, this was the impression conveyed by their rich, soft quality.

There were also very handsome carpets in green shades; one of myrtle colour, another of delicate sea-green in which the pattern was defined by a little wave of lighter tint that undulated through the thick, soft pile. The picture which hung near, of a barefooted Donegal girl, agile and graceful as a mountain deer, drew attention to the fact that such girls were the principal weavers of these carpets. I may mention another picture concerning this industry which caught the eye in the windows of Messrs Millar & Beatty, Grafton Street, Dublin—agents for these carpets—namely, a spirited water-colour sketch of a scene in Donegal: carts laden with bales of carpets and drawn by the poor patient donkeys, to whom for once honour is given. Underneath is written, 'The Irish Camel.'

From the method of the manufacture, it follows that these cannot be cheap carpets in the ordinary sense of the word. The price per square yard varies from seventeen to forty-five shillings. They can be made of any colouring or to any shape, while the success and beauty of the work depend very much on the worker. It is encouraging to those who believe in a future for Irish industries to hear that 'the first year has proved

that Irish girls are admirably adapted for the work,' as 'they show a nimbleness of finger and sharpness of eye for colour and form that have astonished their teachers; and they take up the work with a spirit and cheerfulness that is quite refreshing.'

Had Irish women failed in this first year's test of their industry and skill, the scheme now planned out to spread this work over the west of Ireland would probably never have been contemplated; but already the originators have little doubt 'that the Irish hand-made fabrics will soon bulk largely in the markets of the world,' or that the further development of their undertaking will be as successful as its beginnings. It will give employment to many hundreds of girls and boys; and one of its most important features will be the rearing of sufficient sheep on these Western Highlands to supply the full requirements of an industry whose goods are made entirely of wool. This wool will be spun and dyed on the spot, for in both of these arts Irish women are adepts; and the 'soft, unfading colours produced by the people from common plants and mosses' are in great demand for friezes, homespuns, tweeds, and all woollen goods.

Turning to the statistics on which this projected scheme is based, it is reckoned that one girl in the industry will work up in a year the wool of two hundred and twenty-five sheep. When the number employed increases to a thousand, as is expected in a very few years, it will mean the consumption of the fleeces of over ten thousand score of sheep annually, and a sum divided among the sheep-farmers of something like fifteen thousand pounds. For the spinning, dyeing, and weaving of this wool the families of these farmers or small holders would earn in wages from twenty thousand to thirty thousand pounds, making a total of perhaps forty thousand pounds circulated among the inhabitants of these Donegal hills.

There is nothing utopian about this scheme; and perhaps the fact that a Scotch firm—Messrs Morton of Darvel, Ayrshire—carry on this industry is a sufficient guarantee that the project is both feasible and eminently practicable. Confining their efforts entirely to Donegal at first, the promoters are building a place at Killybegs to accommodate over four hundred workers, this number being available within a radius of two miles from the village. Having an ideal harbour, as well as a branch of the Donegal Railway, Killybegs is meant to be the central depôt, where all wool will be collected, and spinning and dyeing done for the entire industry. Other branches, for weaving only, will be established at villages such as Kilear, Ardara, Glenties, &c., and the products forwarded to the central depôt for finishing and despatch. For more scattered and outlying parts, where girls could not walk morning and evening to a factory, a



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The Donegal carpets do not require the appeal to 'support home industries.' Once seen, they will be bought for the sound quality of the texture, the touch of art in design and colouring, and for their beauty; in short, for their intrinsic merit. Carpets have already been made at Killybegs for some of the highest decorative art critics in England and America; and work is at present going on for important public buildings.

World-wide attention has been called to this industry from the fact of Her Majesty the Queen having ordered from Messrs Millar & Beatty a Donegal carpet, to be made at Killybegs. The design chosen is in shaded red, of a very fine quality and on handsome rose-coloured ground. The variety of beautiful designs and colourings were particularly remarked on by Sir Fleetwood Edwardes when conveying the order.

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The Congested Districts (Government) Board has heartily supported the venture from the first, and the Messrs Morton speak in high terms of the extreme courtesy and assistance they have met with everywhere, from priest and people alike. What wonder? All who care for the people see that this industry means for them a release from the hard struggle of existence, a share in life's ordinary comforts, and room for the development of minds hitherto crushed under the burden of direst poverty and privation. Above and beyond all, it will give them freedom to dwell at ease among their native hills and lakes, whose magic chains them to the soil while the hardest life is possible upon it, or draws them back from comparative comfort in other lands with the cry which the poet has voiced:

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I hear lake-water lapping with low sounds on the shore;  
While I stand in the roadway or on the pavement gray  
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## THE SILVER LOTAH.

IN FOUR PARTS.—PART III.



HE stable was deserted when Colonel Matthias entered it, and it was plain, from the scene disclosed by the lantern on the wall, that the *saises* had been awakened when the alarm had sounded in the house, and had risen up from sleep inside their blankets, and fled, helter-skelter, with the hue-and-cry. The note of preparation on which Mrs Black had harped was true, for a big, deep-chested Waler stood saddled and bridled in the nearest stall. His eye turned toward the new-comer inquiringly, and Matthias answered it by clapping his neck in kindly salute and leading him through the low doorway. Once there he flung leg over saddle, and paused to take note of his surroundings.

The high-hedged garden at the back of the house was sheeted in moonlight, and so deserted and still was it that the murmur of voices from the house, which threw a black shadow to the rear, could be heard humming plainly from an upper window. It warned the Colonel that he might be seen at any moment; and observing a stable-gate that stood open—was that by design or accident?—he made for it, and was soon clattering, unobserved and unpursued, down the

road that pointed, straight as an arrow, to the looming hills and to the north.

His escape, and a brain-clearing freshness in the midnight air, set Colonel Matthias musing, as the big horse swung out under him in a long canter, at his impetuosity. He wondered not less at the mystery of the night's affairs than at the manner in which he had taken up the work without, as it seemed on reflection, his own will or volition. He remembered also Mrs Black's attack on him—an inconceivable boldness in an Eastern woman—and all that had ensued upon it. Was there some occult power in the silver lotah that set mere mortals dancing at its behest, and that was at once servant and master, like the genii of a fairy-tale? Matthias was not a superstitious man; but the vision he had seen, and its fulfilment, were still strong in his memory. He gave up attempt at fitting solutions, and turned himself to the task that lay before him.

It was, as he had said, thirty miles to Yusufghât, which he knew to be a frontier village that scarred the side of a distant mountain—thirty miles by the lonely hill-roads that climbed up and up, from shoulder to shoulder of the Himalayan slopes, twisting through gorges, scrambling

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The high-hedged garden at the back of the house was sheeted in moonlight, and so deserted and still was it that the murmur of voices from the house, which threw a black shadow to the rear, could be heard humming plainly from an upper window. It warned the Colonel that he might be seen at any moment; and observing a stable-gate that stood open—was that by design or accident?—he made for it, and was soon clattering, unobserved and unpursued, down the

road that pointed, straight as an arrow, to the looming hills and to the north.

His escape, and a brain-clearing freshness in the midnight air, set Colonel Matthias musing, as the big horse swung out under him in a long canter, at his impetuosity. He wondered not less at the mystery of the night's affairs than at the manner in which he had taken up the work without, as it seemed on reflection, his own will or volition. He remembered also Mrs Black's attack on him—an inconceivable boldness in an Eastern woman—and all that had ensued upon it. Was there some occult power in the silver lotah that set mere mortals dancing at its behest, and that was at once servant and master, like the genii of a fairy-tale? Matthias was not a superstitious man; but the vision he had seen, and its fulfilment, were still strong in his memory. He gave up attempt at fitting solutions, and turned himself to the task that lay before him.

It was, as he had said, thirty miles to Yusufghât, which he knew to be a frontier village that scarred the side of a distant mountain—thirty miles by the lonely hill-roads that climbed up and up, from shoulder to shoulder of the Himalayan slopes, twisting through gorges, scrambling



beside torrents, threading among the deodars, and narrowing always into the desolation of the inner country. Matthias knew those ledges—goat-tracks almost—that zigzagged above the native precipices and the jungle-covered hill-elbows; he knew the silence that brooded over them, and the still more profound silence that lay under a quilt of mist in the valleys below. He knew, as only the hunter knows, the lone weirdness of the whispering forests. And where was Nathoo?

The Waler did well along the metalled high-road, and up the cart-track to Banôg, and he hardly slackened pace as he covered the incline of the first ten miles of well-made spiral thoroughfare. The Timli valley slid softly down behind them; Matthias saw it drop, as the miles passed, with the likeness of a vague and shimmering dreamland, which the moonlight only helped to make more unreal. He found the last two miles to Banôg pass slowly, for he had left the track; and, as the path narrowed and became steeper than before, the Australian horse stepped nervously, shying at the crowding shadows, and at the tall precipices that dropped below his hoofs.

Banôg was reached, a little village half-way up the bare and rugged hump from which it took its name.

The Colonel, not without some misgiving, dismounted amidst a sleepy silence, and shouted a tentative '*Qui-hai?*' ('Who's there?'). To his relief there was an answering halloo from the nearest hut, and a brown figure ran out to unhitch the saddle. A second half-clad villager led the horse away, blowing and steaming as he went, and in another minute Matthias was on his way, his thighs gripping the sturdy barrel of a Kabuli pony, as lithe and active as a monkey. The service was done in an unquestioning eagerness, and, once done, its doers vanished into their hut. Matthias, or some other for whom he was mistaken, had been expected.

The village left behind, the pony settled into a rack, and scuffled with clever hoofs over the bridle-path, as it dipped and soared and wound about the hillsides to Kijni. The moon was dropping now. It winked at the solitary rider through the dips in the landscape; and when the heights blotted it out, a solemn darkness, in which Matthias could guess the wild beasts lurking, brooded over the deodars and rhododendrons, the stunted mountain woodlands, and the barren steeps that shayed between them. A nervous foreboding—with which he struggled angrily—began to settle upon the traveller. He eyed the jungle, where it edged the path, with an anxiety he would have laughed to scorn in another man, and it was with a breath of full relief that he heard the Kabuli neigh as it recognised the last gray ridge that hid the huts of Kijni.

The incident of Banôg was repeated; but this time a little rat-like country-bred took the place

of the foreigner, and again Matthias was sped on his way without delay or question. He looked at his watch as he left the brown men hurrying back to their snug blankets. It was three o'clock, and in another forty minutes moonset would be upon him.

The Colonel was chilly and stiff. He was not accustomed to sitting so long in the saddle, and in this high altitude the air was keen and bitter, bearing in its breath the sting of the wind from off the snows. It was with pleasure that he saw the first part of his road lay upon a long, hog's-backed hill, and that the moonlight still slanted along it from end to end, in contrast to the black jungle which sloped from the sky and lined the steep descent below at the next mile.

He wondered if the lotah were safe. The amble of the *tat* was as easy as an arm-chair. Matthias unbuttoned his coat, took the silver vase from an inner pocket, and laying the reins upon the pony's neck, cupped it in both hands as he looked upon it once more.

It might have been, now that the preceding experience of the night had an effect, but it was not only the sense of mystery that Matthias experienced when he dropped his eyes. He no longer questioned the influence the silver lotah possessed; all that remained was the stupefaction with which he recognised that it was once more quick and dominant. His gaze was drawn, as it seemed to him, by the sympathy, magnetism, magic—there was no name for the power to which he mentally succumbed. Once more a numbness paralysed his will and his knowledge of time and proportion, and with his eyes riveted upon the dark interior of the vase, the Colonel rode slowly along the hill, for the second and last time of his life a seer of things incredible.

The drift curled away again like smoke, and the black depths were moulded into a living picture. This time Matthias saw the steep sides of a wooded valley, a silent, desolate spot, grow out of the shadows, and saw a bridle-path skirt about the hill, half-way to the summit—such a path as he had already ridden over that night, and would meet again when the hog's-back ended. The tops of the trees below were level with the foot-way, and they made a screen that hid everything but a confused tangle of rocks and shadows and night mists from the road. Matthias saw how steeply the gorge leapt there to the stream-bed in its heart, and how menacing was the precipice that the foliage hid; but it was not then that his attention was caught by the knowledge.

There was a zigzag in the road—to be exact, it was full of corners—and there was a man in hiding on the north side of the angle. His back was pressed against the wall of rock, and his head was inclined to southward, listening for what might come. Behind him, dimly outlined in the gloom, a tired horse shivered and sweated. Matthias

could see the dark patch behind the girth that meant a night of remorseless spurring. He did not need to look twice upon the ambush. It was Nathoo the murderer, and the knife in his hand, the fierce determination in his face—it reminded the Colonel of the bristling fury of a panther—told for whom he waited.

The picture branded itself upon the memory of Matthias; and then, as he looked for the encounter that should follow, the vapours curled again over the scene and the wicked face that made its significance, and Nathoo and his ambush faded into invisibility. Matthias brushed his hand across his eyes and stared and waited and stared again. There was nothing to be seen but the empty body of the silver lotah.

He replaced it, struggling from his dazed and breathless attitude as a dreamer struggles out of sleep. He lifted his head and let the night-air blow about his brain. . . . A vision? It was a warning, and of a very present danger.

Matthias looked ahead and saw where the edges of the jungle chased the moonbeams back. He was not a coward; but this secret and lurking enemy, revealed to him by means so weird and marvellous, was not a foe to his mind. Nevertheless, he could only go forward, and keep his hand ready and his eyes alert.

The country-bred tripped across the hog's-back, and followed the path as it plunged downwards into the obscurity of the lower hillside. The undergrowth bent above him, and the trees stretched up from below, while the narrow track curved in and out, only a few yards of it visible at a time among the shadows. The air smelt cold and dank; and Matthias, who recognised the similarity of the road he was about to pass to that he had seen in the lotah, shivered with apprehension. It needed all the self-control of a brave man to keep him from wheeling about and abandoning his commission; and every time a leaf stirred, or an owl hooted, or a stone was kicked by the pony's feet over the edge of the precipice, his pulses jumped and his fingers clutched at the trigger of his revolver. He was there to kill or to be killed: there was a cold-bloodedness about the chances that chilled his spirit.

The path twisted unexpectedly; and almost before he turned the corner Matthias recognised the place of the vision, and saw the fury-possessed face of Nathoo, his eyeballs starting and his teeth bared, fling out of the darkness. If it had not been for the preparation which had been given him, the Colonel's fate would have been sealed on the instant. As it was, he had time

to spring from his pony on the near side as the murderer darted at him, and to see the knife that was intended for his heart come down harmlessly across the saddle.

The attack and the force of the arm-sweep upon the pigskin made the pony jib, and Matthias closed with his adversary under its nose. He had flung himself forward with the intention of pinning Nathoo's arm before he could lift it again, and of bringing the revolver to work without risk of failure; but his onslaught had a more terrible effect. A counter-attack was not what the enemy had anticipated. He sprang back, whirling his hand out to bring the knife with a side thrust to Matthias's ribs; and then, suddenly, the Colonel dashed his free fist into his face in time to ward off the clutch that came with the instinct of self-preservation. For one moment the evil face was upturned to Matthias's, full of rage and despair beyond description, and in the next there was a rasping scream, the crash of the undergrowth, and Nathoo's figure was wiped as cleanly from the scene as if it had never been.

The rapidity of the catastrophe and the silence that followed paralysed Colonel Matthias. He stood still, beads of perspiration upon his forehead, his body bent as he peered over the precipice. The valley was shockingly still; the night was impenetrable; only the frightened horses, snorting and backing on the roadway, gave company to the victor. He called his enemy by name. No answer. He knelt and felt with his hands where the path ended. There was nothing there. Not a trace of Nathoo stirred in the whispering tree-tops below the little ledge. He was gone, as the old woman had said, to die in the darkness, and to fall into the vast and open grave which yawned in that impenetrable valley.

So the lotah held itself from the unworthy hands that coveted it, and Matthias was saved from the risk of bloodshed that had hung over him all through his ride. He lingered at the spot for some time, in case a cry or a moan should tell that life had survived the awful leap that Nathoo's body had made into the darkness. It was not, indeed, until the hush of his surroundings was broken by faint chirps and rustles, and the dawn began to sponge the shadows from the sky, that he mounted and rode on to Yusufghât in the broadening daylight; and as he turned his back upon the scene of the tragedy, Nathoo's horse neighed forlornly from the rear, and moved with tired, listless trot after him.



## A QUAIN TOWN OF CORSICA.



THE visitor to Bonifacio of Corsica in summer will be sure to remember its flies and its primitive sanitary arrangements, as well as its startling picturesqueness. The town has a bad name elsewhere in the island on these two first points. When, in any other village, I ventured to refer mildly to the indifferent smells or the mosquito or two which troubled sleep, I had but to mention Bonifacio afterwards to soothe away the look of trouble which my local discontent had conjured up. 'Ah! at Bonifacio there is everything that is unpleasant!' the retort came eagerly at one time; this with a glad grimace and other tokens of contempt. One person, a native of this majestic little citadel-town, in declining to confirm my opinion about its flies, volunteered the information that its winds were its one vice. He had had to remove his wife to an inland town out of the way of them, because they disagreed with her chest. 'But there is no other place in the world like it,' he added proudly. That is rather an extensive statement, and yet it is true enough. To begin with: approaching it from the north—as you must if you come to it by land—there is something, as it seems, almost out of the order of nature in the abrupt change from the dreary thickets (*macchia*) of arbutus, myrtle, and heath closely matted, with or without stinking pools and dead river-mouths, to the uprising chalk-cliffs and the chalk-hillocks cleft by the road which usher in this southern tip of the island. The blinding white walls are hung with ivy. There are sober olive orchards by the acre, and the fig-tree rejoices in its strength; and, crowning all, there is the golden mass of Bonifacio's walls, pretty much still as when Alfonso of Aragon in 1420 tried to knock them down with his cannon, and failed. 'Golden' is not too extravagant a word. Time puts the fairest of colours on such walls as Bonifacio's, even as the Mediterranean winds here drape the trees on the town's outskirts with lichens and lavish moss, which are themselves a glory.

You descend by white ravines to the indigo-blue pool of the town's harbour; and there, from the water's level, you zigzag up to the houses which just show above the precipices of the walls two hundred odd feet over your head. It is not at all the sort of climb people down here choose for a noontide constitutional; but about the sunset hour officers and their wives, citizens with white umbrellas, and long-legged maidens from the convent school may all be seen trooping from the shadowy eastern portal of the walls and winding down to the water. With them are the modest asses which do most of the burden-bearing hereabouts, and white-teethed and merry rascals who swing their cudgels upon the asses.

I had come with some pains and not a little eager, earnest longing towards the town from the north. Corsica is a rough land, ever echoing its complaints against France for not offering her more of the sweets of an active civilisation. France certainly does neglect her. The very latest plea that even Sardinia is beating her sister-isle in the march towards enlightenment is justified if railways mean what they are generally held to signify. Bonifacio, a fortified town and the key to the straits of its name, itself in constant view from a long line of Sardinia's coast, is still fifty miles from a railway station. The wooden boxes with holes cut at the sides and short planks fixed inside, which pass current for diligences, and by which alone the average traveller gets to the town, are terrible concerns. They aspire to five miles an hour, and break down at that. The hamlets by the way are poor, fever-stricken places, with little in them that is fit to eat. Hence my ardour towards this town on a rock with about a thousand years of existence on its register.

Yet it disappointed from the outset. Never have I been presented with so repulsive a view as that from the window of my bedroom in the Hôtel de France here, with the clanking of martial swords in its corridors. I was at an angle and in full possession of the external details of a towering wall of back windows (six stories of them) which was the other side of the angle. Ever and anon there was a splash or a thud. It was the discharge of refuse from one of the windows. The wall was streaked with filth and its base a mountain thereof. Thus situated, it was not wonderful that my room was clouded with flies from sunrise to sunset. But it was here or nowhere in the circumstances, for two diligences had brought more soldiers and bagmen into the town, and so I risked it for a couple of nights. Happily the wind was not in my quarter until the last hour or two of my sojourn. Then it behoved me to run from the room.

The somewhat brutal comfort that proceeds from a creditable *table d'hôte* was also lacking. As a fortified town, Bonifacio is of course (in these days of France) run by the military. If his Magnificence the Brigadier X. happened to be late in coming to dinner, the soup was not served, and this, too, although these much-cursed men of blood dined apart from the civilian guests of the hotel. One meets the French *commis* perforce a good deal if one travels in France, and he is usually an amiable fellow with a rather heavy system of politeness in his intercourse with others at table. But here at Bonifacio his amiability quite broke down, and no wonder. The talk about the 'military despotism' of France and the future it was preparing for the country was extremely ardent. 'And it's the same everywhere,' they



agreed. 'And the nation will not stand much more of it,' they also agreed. So it went on even when the seven o'clock dinner was served at half-past eight, while the resounding laughter of the officers' mess drifted into the room with each fresh course.

Still, it were an injustice not to mention the ripe figs of Bonifacio, large as the fist, and the excellent lobsters taken under the town walls of chalk on the Sardinian side of the town. It may or may not improve the appetite to be waited on by an infantry soldier in uniform.

The streets of Bonifacio are as sensational as the site of the town. They are very, very narrow, and the houses on both sides soar high. Flying butresses are set across the streets in many places, with graceful effect. One gathers that they are by no means merely ornamental. The sun and the wind are the powers here which it is imperative to dodge, and these well-like streets serve their purpose. But what weird perfumes do drift about these tortuous cuts of stone and mortar from the rock-hewn cellars beneath the houses! They, like the houses, may date from the days close after the time of the great siege. Discoloured little churches rise as if half-choked amid the domestic precipices. From them, too, the mellow odours are strong. There must be a multitude of Bonifacio people under the paving-slabs of their aisles; and granite and chalk are not ideal aids to their comfortable dissolution in dust. Perhaps it might have been better to use the sea for the removal of the town's dead, as was suggested to me by a communicative tradesman who had drawn me to his back premises to see his view. Plumb from the frail wooden terrace he had built from his dining-room, a stone might have been dropped seventy yards into the blue Mediterranean, which here lazily lapped the white roots of Bonifacio's rock. 'How easy,' my friend observed, 'to accommodate the departed with a quiet resting-spot by means of a windlass and a rope!' But, in fact, he joked. The Mediterranean is shallow yards from this side of the town; the white plaques of rock in the water shine through it with bright effect. A mosaic of the old and less old dead of Bonifacio thus set in the water, and well visible from above when the flies did not quite obscure the power of vision, would not add to the joys of life.

About half of the surface of Bonifacio's rock is given up to the soldiers who colour its days and shout in its streets. This is as it should be, in keeping with the town's history. One sees the merry fellows tramping to their quarters with red joints for the larder or with their arms full of cabbages and the good lettuces which grow in the protected gardens beyond the harbour; and inside the citadel they play like schoolboys, or hang about the great walls looking at Sardinia over the way. The modern craze for beards among France's warriors does not become these striplings; but they conform to the fashion, and

bear the consequences bravely. It were dangerous here for the stranger to show anything like a critical interest in the guns and newer walls with which Genoa's medieval fortifications have been embellished: the sentry soon makes that apparent; but away from the jealous eyes of France one may be permitted to say that the strength of the place is still left largely to nature. Some talk of Bonifacio as a second Gibraltar. The comparison cannot really be made; nor would it be worth France's while to spend millions on a little rock like this, which has lost the value it had when Genoa resolved at all costs to defend it. But it is a fair nursery for recruits, who may by-and-by be sent to tropical colonies where flies are even more numerous than here. Nevertheless, it is also significant that additional batteries are being laid out on the herb-clad headland which runs east from the town's rock towards the lighthouse and signal station of Pertusato; and here, on these June days, I found other companies of soldiers camped in tents, reefing their baggy breeches as protection against the wind, drilling, and otherwise playing a warlike part. Italy's recent development and interest in the French borders excite suspicion in France; and Corsica, like Nice, is, comparatively speaking, a late addition to the republic's territory. Perhaps in all the island no town except Bonifacio in the south and Calvi in the north would welcome incorporation with Italy; and then only on the strength of their traditional and somewhat faded sympathies with Genoa. In the main, Corsica, where it has no French officials to leaven its politics, is still Corsican rather than French; and in the mountains the old spirit of independence is far from dead. For these and other obvious reasons, France is bound to keep active garrisons in the island, though she would do better by much with the more acceptable chains of a maternal administration. More railways, drained marshes, increased education, and a daily steamboat service would bind the island to the Continent in self-interest and gratitude. As it is, it is scarcely too much to say that Corsica is only kept from open revolt by the element of prosperity brought to her by the tourists of winter. Few of these come to Bonifacio, however, the majority no doubt considering the game not quite worth the candle.

A very fine witness to old Bonifacio stands in the Templars' Church among the barracks, gymnasium, and storehouses of the citadel. The octagonal tower to this church, with its tiers of windows, is one of the best bits of architecture in Corsica. The building itself is well preserved, for which one is grateful. The whitewash which dazzles in it might with advantage be out of the way; but it does at least seem to cool the inner atmosphere among the graceful arches of the aisle and the flat tombstones above so much

of Genoa's very good blood gone to dust. It is a feather in Bonifacio's cap, or ought to be, that the Genoese grew so fond of it for its situation and unchangeable loyalty that the best of her aristocracy crossed the sea to settle in it. Their escutcheons, greatly flattened by time, still stand above the portals of houses which nowadays somewhat horrify with their gloom, their unsavouriness, and the knots of unclean men, women, and children who loiter through the hours on their thresholds. I dare say the governor of the citadel would, on application, allow the stranger to photograph the Templars' Church; but the man who without permission turned a camera towards it would more likely than not receive police attentions of a very stern kind ere the evening.

Hard by this church is the huge tower which has seen quite six and a half centuries of Bonifacio's vicissitudes. It was old when the citizens defied Alfonso of Aragon and all his fleet in the blocked harbour beneath, and when, to prove that they were still far from starvation, they sent the king loaves of bread and cheeses made from the milk of their own wives. One may hope that it will not, one of these careless days, be blown to fragments by explosion of a magazine due to a happy-go-lucky subaltern and his cigarette. The sentries are sufficiently sharp on the civilian who here strikes a match and then another (for the wind takes toll of the first); but his own order act as they please.

Some day the charms of Bonifacio as they appeal to the mere tourist will no doubt be advertised more effectually than at present. There will

be a through line of railway from Bastia, and a hotel in which the civilian is considered on an equality with the officers of the garrison. The boatmen down in the great harbour will then rejoice, for it will mean plenty of boat-hire to view the great caves bored in the chalk-cliffs by the south-westerly gales, which here beat without mercy. These caves are the curiosities of which Bonifacio is most proud. There are many of them, and the pools in them are crystal-clear and still as the rocks themselves. Here, too, there is coolness when outside only the flies can find pleasure. The sublime aspect of the brooding broken face of the cliffs is quite as well worth viewing thus as the holes weathered in it. But Bonifacio herself is better than all.

There was a certain colonel at the hotel here who, having a wife and children, dined in the common room of the hotel. A pill-box and a phial containing a red fluid were set by his knives and forks: he was a colonel with a digestion impaired at least. This gentleman, in an after-dinner moment, was rash enough to mention Bonifacio and the Acropolis of Athens in one breath. 'But you must get the right point of view to realise the resemblance,' he added. Some six kilometres on the Sartène road the right point of view may be reached. Then, looking back, Bonifacio's almost insulated knot of rock is cameoed strongly against the sky, and its towers and churches are all of it that show above its ponderous walls. They seem at that distance to have less connection with the active present than with a decayed past.

## NIXON'S ARMISTICE.

By HAROLD BINDLOSS.

**I**T was a dismal afternoon when, with sloppy decks and wet canvas straining overhead, the *Islander* clawed her way to windward through the long gray-banded rollers of the northern seas. One moment she hove her bows aloft, the brine streaming from them in green cataracts, then buried them to the bowsprit-heel, while a white cloud leapt up; and, listing to leeward, lifted a weedy side in the air as she charged the next comber with a gurgling rush. Dingy smoke blew flat down from the little patched funnel astern, for the *Islander* was one of those curious craft known as screw-schooners, which, with auxiliary engines and large sail-spread, found risky employment carrying, sealing, and sometimes whaling along the wild and lonely coast stretching from the Frazer mouth in British Columbia, past Point Barrow, to the frozen tundra of the Arctic Ocean.

Of the three, sealing was perhaps the most perilous; for the shallow waters between St

George of the Pribyloffs, round by the Russian Komandorskis, where seals also haul up, to the lonely Diomedes which, girt with surf or ice-fringe, stand in the gateway of the Polar Sea, are alternately swept by tempest or veiled in sleet and mist. They are also troubled by currents which change their direction suddenly from no apparent cause, and cast fog-blinded skippers upon uncharted reefs.

Nixon, the *Islander's* master, a big, hard-featured man in white fur-coat which would have sold for almost its weight in silver in eastern Canada, gripped the steering-wheel. He found comfort in the steady throb of the engines and occasional whirr of the racing screw, for one of the Komandorski Isles lay close abeam, and he was anxious to leave it astern lest he chanced on the Russian gunboat known to be thereabout. The hold was well lined with the skins of fur-seals; and, having landed to fill his salted boilers with fresh water, he felt it might be hard to convince the Muscovite commander that the skins had been

taken outside the ten-mile limit. Even within the last few years strange and high-handed things had been done on both sides, while the *lex talionis* was the one law men obeyed in those latitudes.

Sheltering from the bitter spray under the nested boats, some dozen modern free-lances—trained sealers, broken-down lumbermen, and deserters from merchant-ships—growled to one another; while men of darker colour—Aleuts, Kaloshians, Japanese—crouched under the break of the little forecastle.

'Stream's running harder than ever,' said Nixon presently. 'We've been half-an-hour opening that big headland. Better set the gaff-topsails over the fore-and-afters. It's easier than hauling another reef when the breeze comes screaming down again.'

There was a rattle of halyards; and when the dripping canvas hardened out aloft the *Islander* sluiced her lee-deck with icy brine; while, seen through an opening in the mist, a great black wall of rock rose up perhaps a mile away. White surf licked the ledges at its battered feet, its summit was lost in vapour, and under the pitiless drizzle a roll of dusky sea tumbled between, out of which presently a white cloud leapt up.

'Flatten sheets,' said Nixon sharply. 'I've heard of that reef; but I've never seen it before. We'll take a closer look at it, and get a bearing. It would be a very mean place to bring up on.'

So the schooner crept in nearer the land, and several times again the same thing happened, though at different places in one line between them and the shore. With a loud rumbling a roller burst open, and from out of its shattered seething a lofty column of water rushed up and blew away down the wind in powdery smoke.

'I guess that will do,' said Nixon. 'There's not much water over it, and it lies waiting like a trap with a three-knot tide round the headland—north-half-east by the compass—racing down on it. It's sudden death for the crew of the vessel which goes ashore on that. Keep your eyes lifting forward; we're on our course again.'

The dim land faded behind them, there were only frothy combers and thick drizzle ahead, while the *Islander* thrashed slowly against the current, until by-and-by a warning shout rose up: 'Something like a vessel's canvas looming ahead.' Nixon pulled the wheel over a spoke or two. He knew of only one vessel likely to be cruising there, and was by no means desirous of meeting her; but, even as the schooner canted a little, two slanted spars and a steamer's funnel came out of the vapour. Rolling wildly, she lifted a wall of dripping side out of the sea, for the two small topsails and rag of fore-and-aft canvas failed even to steady her; and the crew of the *Islander*, watching breathlessly, saw two men clinging to her inclined bridge.

'The Russian!' said Nixon. 'Stand by your halyards to pile more sail on to her;' but, as the

startled men flung down coils of line, the gunboat listed towards them with a white welter along her side, and vanished into a thicker eddying of mist and rain astern. It all happened in a few moments; but that was long enough for practised eyes to grasp the position, and the mate laughed as he said, 'She won't hurt us, anyway. Engine's broken down, and hardly sail enough to steer her. This isn't a nice place, skipper, to cruise around like that.'

A low growl of satisfaction ran along the crew, for during several unsettled years there had been little love lost between the representatives of two great Powers who, steadily spreading their dominion east and west, met at last on the narrow dividing-belt of the fog-wrapped Behring Sea. Indeed, in Sitka, Vancouver, and Portland (Oregon) reckless sailor-men told tales which recalled the days of privateering; and those who knew just how much was true sent warnings to Ottawa and Washington.

'What was that?' said Nixon, starting, for a sudden concussion came out of the rain, reverberating as though repeated from a wall of rock; and the mate answered dryly, 'Russian commander getting scared by a sight of the coast. He must feel himself in a very tight place to expect assistance from us. Let him find a sheltered cove and crawl into it himself. Ah! I had forgotten the reef. It's bad holding-ground to anchor hereabouts—isn't it?'

The hollow boom of another gun reached them; and Nixon, acting by instinct, rang off his engines, for something in that pealing call for help speaks to the heart of every seaman plainly. The thumping of engines ceased, the spray-cloud grew thinner at the bows, and the *Islander* plunged more leisurely to the lift of the seas. For a few moments her crew looked at each other in silence. They had heard of the sufferings of sealers' crews, confiscated illegally, their owners said. One had run the gauntlet of Russian guns when fishing in what he claimed to be neutral waters, and several of the others had nearly paid the penalty of their own wrongdoing, prospecting by half-thawn river-mouths for fossil ivory, or shooting seals close in to forbidden beaches. Then they thought of the murderous ledge lying in wait for its prey, ready to crush the gunboat's bilges in like a walnut-shell. Stubborn and reckless men they were; but the sea was a common enemy to Briton and Russian alike; and under the hatred, which was chiefly commercial, they recognised in the men who sailed from Siberia a grim, enduring courage equal to their own.

So there was a second growl of approval, with a different note in it, when Nixon said, 'They would hound us off the seas if they could; but we can't let them drown. She's driving down-tide straight to perdition. Stand by your sheets while I gybe her round.'



With a lurch that tried the stout spars of Oregon pine, the reefed canvas swung over; and the *Islander* came round upon her heel, rolling down until her lee-rail was washing in the brine, and drove away on the track of the helpless steamer.

'There she is!' shouted some one presently, as a rush of freshening breeze swept the mist and rain aside. Again the gunboat rose to view, wallowing with inclined masts, and a dim wall of rock behind, across the run of sea which burst in white smoke along her side as she tried to claw off from the shore. A yellow-streaked cloud of vapour, which changed to paler colour, curled down across her forward half, and the boom of the gun was answered by a hoot from the *Islander's* whistle. Giving sharp orders, Nixon slowed his engines. The big gaff-topsails fluttered down, the peak of the mainsail fell, and, with a thunder of loosened canvas, the *Islander* lay plunging, hove-to.

'Swing over the biggest seal-boat and bring their ropes aboard. If you waste any time in talking the reef will get us both. Hurry there. They'll never get that craft afloat,' he said. 'Jump down and tell old Jackson to raise the last ounce of steam he can; we'll want his engines soon, and want them badly.'

A group of indistinct figures were busy underneath one of the Russian's boats; they had been drilled to launch them quickly, which was sometimes very needful in that vessel's business. But she was rolling wildly, and the first attempt resulted in smashing the craft. Now either in boiling tide-race, blinding fog, or among the surf that laps the stranded ice, the sealer-man is unequalled in the art of boat-handling. So, lifted by a Burton tackle, the *Islander's* boat was swung out bodily in a roll across her depressed rail, and she had hardly touched the water when five men leapt into her. The oars splashed together as a sea threatened to heave the schooner crashing on top of her, and she shot away on its broken crest, a chaotic smother boiling above her waist. With both hands on the tiller, glancing over his shoulder now and then at the rush of white-topped seas behind, the mate drove the light craft straight for the steamer; and, rounding her up to leeward, she lay plunging close in under her side.

The rusty plates above them came swinging up and down, laying bare the long weed one moment almost to her bilge, then sinking swiftly until a slope of steep-pitched deck was visible above. Two men in uniform leaned out from the swaying bridge; and one, waving his cap, shouted:

'Our engine she break down; the cable is also go. We promise no investigation if you tow us clear of shore. Very bad reef is found somewhere near.'

Now, the mate had a wife and family in Victoria (B.C.), and, being paid *pro rata* on the net profits, occasionally—perhaps on account of the cruisers' vigilance—found it hard work to

provide for them. Besides, the free-lance sealer sometimes increases his earnings by other means than legally-taken skins; and it struck him that here was a chance of acquiring many roubles. But if the outward semblance of discipline was not conspicuous on board the *Islander*, her crew knew well it was not wise either to add to or subtract from Nixon's orders. So the mate's only answer was, 'Give us your line.' He also realised there was not a moment to lose, and when a man stood holding on by a davit high up on the cruiser's rail, with mingled caution and recklessness bade the oarsmen back the boat in. An oncoming comber picked her up and swept her stern-first towards the wall of inclined plates which, rising bodily, slanted away from them; and the men clenched their wet hands tighter on the looms, holding their breath as they waited the order. Each knew what would happen unless they shot clear before the return roll. Then the gunboat's plates commenced to slant towards them again, and two lines fell clattering into the stern-sheets of the boat.

'Give way before she smashes us!' shouted the mate; and, with every man gasping under the strain, the stout oars bending as they ripped through the water, the boat shot clear just in time to avoid the downward swoop of rusty iron.

'Well done,' he said briefly. 'Now, pull all you're worth. Unless you make her rustle we'll both of us fetch up on the reef.'

The drag of the lines was heavy, long, tumbling seas racing at them abeam; but the crew had now a suspicion they were pulling for their lives. So, hove up on the spouting crest or sliding down into the steep hollow, they drove her smoking towards the *Islander*. Then, after swinging the boat on board, they helped to haul the lines and following hawsers in.

When at last the ropes were fast, Nixon rung his engine telegraph, and said, 'Tide's setting us both inshore, and the reef can't be far away. Get more canvas on her, every rag she'll stand; then, if we can't beat the current, we'll try to snatch her out clear of its seaward end.'

The screw throbbed; the wire hawsers twanged as they ripped, splashing, out of the sea; and the pounding of little engines quickened. Meantime the crew were busy shaking reefs out; and when they had finished this the schooner lay down with her lee-rail nearly awash, every larger wave lapping solidly over it. Below, the grimy engineer knew what was expected of him, and did it thoroughly. So red flame licked about the funnel, and smoke and sparks blown into the straining mizzen came back and almost blinded Nixon as he grasped the steering-wheel. Bitter spray lashed over the weather-rail, and astern, at the end of the hawsers, the tow wallowed erratically, sometimes shooting towards them with bows swung high aloft, or careering sideways on the crest of a sea,

when the steel rope, drawn tight as an iron bar, threatened to drag the schooner's stern under. Then the tiller-chains rattled as the wheel went round; and, canting a little, the half-buried vessel shook herself free again, her crew dodging the water that rolled a foot deep across her deck. With no cause to love the men whose one hope of salvation lay in the staunchness of those ropes, they came of a hard and stubborn kind, and, as one of them said, having taken on that contract, they were going through with it.

So, shaking the icy water from the quaint garments of canvas and furs, they stared down into the obscurity—for daylight was fading from the waste of tumbling sea—until a hoarse cry went up, 'There's the reef breaking broad on our lee-bow.'

Half-seen, a cloud of smoke hurled itself aloft, a second white upheaval appeared farther ahead, and Nixon's face grew anxious as he wrenched upon the wheel. Then a gun flashed out a warning from the tow, and the *Islander's* skipper laughed dryly as he said, 'Commander's getting frightened, or does he think we're blind? He ought to know us better than to fancy we'll let him go.'

Again the buried reef made itself manifest, and there was more shouting forward, as here and there at intervals other great spouts shot up, forming a long chain of breakers with broad gaps between, towards the centre of which the sealer and her helpless charge drove down sideways.

'More steam!' the mate called through the engine-room skylights. 'You'll have to chance your boilers; it's neck or nothing!' A long tongue of crimson poured from the funnel. The mate clenched his hands and glanced towards an axe in the mizzen rack, and then at the skipper. Balancing himself to the rolling, with iron hands laid on the spokes of the kicking wheel, Nixon only shook his head; and the mate, comprehending, turned his eyes forward.

A sea, sniting the bulwarks, now poured a broken cataract into the foresail's foot, and rolled away in a bevelled ridge, apparently a fathom higher than her depressed side. When the *Islander* climbed out of the hollow Nixon saw two of the spray-fountains over her quarter, and one white eruption perilously close ahead.

'It's touch and go,' he said. 'If we can scrape her past that pinnacle, there's open water. You can see what will happen if she hits it;' and the words that followed were lost in a deep growling—the voice of the hammered reef. A sea shot aloft above it in a majestic pyramid that collapsed into chaotic seething, and there was deep silence on board of the *Islander*. Some of her crew held their breath, while others, with straining eyes, caught hard at it, as they watched the mad welter slide aft from abreast of the bowsprit towards the waist. They were horribly near the reef, and yet there remained a chance

of safety, for two blows of the axe upon the drawn-out hemp springs which held the towing-wire would free the schooner from the danger.

Still, as Nixon said afterwards, not a man moved; though he also added something to the effect that they knew better. Now the seaward end of the ledge was level with, and much nearer, the mizzen, while the tow came sheering towards them with her fore-foot in the air.

The mate leapt up on the stern-grating, swinging the axe. The gunboat astern lifted one side to the bilge as she reeled down a sea, with bridge and deck sloping half-way to the vertical, while across her hung one great cloud of foam. The mate sprang from the grating for his life as one parted hawser came home with a bang like a rifle shot. He was up next moment, gripping the axe again; but Nixon shouted, 'Stand by; don't cut until she strikes; we'll give them a last chance for it. Gather in the broken rope before it fouls the screw.'

One wire, lessened in diameter, still held fast; and ready hands ran the broken hawser in. For a space of seconds the crew watched the Russian gunboat rise apparently for the last time on the crest of a sea. They expected to see the tall spars go when she came down again; a crash of iron on stone seemed already sounding in their ears; but as she staggered and swayed back a roar of breathless exultation went up. The last of the deadly seething lay under her stern, and a half-heard answering shout reached them brokenly as rescuers and rescued realised that they had cheated the reef.

Again the cry rang out above the boom of the sea as the danger slid away, and some one shouted, 'We're clear. They're cheering us in the Russian.'

'I'm thankful, and glad we did it,' said Nixon quietly, as he pulled over the wheel, while the mate found relief to his feelings in hurrying about with orders to get the canvas off.

Following the coast-line with wind and sea behind, the *Islander* now towed her consort into the gathering darkness, until, just as black night closed down, she brought her safely under a sheltering head. Hardly had they made the two vessels snug than a boat pulled across from the Russian cruiser; and, bumping alongside the schooner, a lieutenant stated that the commander requested the favour of her officers' company. He also wished to leave several bulky cases of cabin stores, which he trusted the skipper would serve out to the crew.

Then Nixon, with his mate and engineer and several boat-steerers, leapt down from the rail, and were received in state at the gunboat's gangway, and ushered into her mess-room.

Outside, a rising gale shrilled along the face of the rock, and struck weird music from the rigging; but under the polished brass lamps inside it was warm and snug, while there were flasks of wine and many dainties on the mess-room table.

Lounging in luxurious comfort, the unkempt, furl-clad sealer-men fraternised with their occasional enemies, the severely-uniformed officers of the Czar, the sound of their merriment even reaching the watch on deck through the dull boom of the ground-sea. They ate and drank, and they jested in different languages. At the engineer's request, another boat was sent to the schooner; he thought he could give the Russians hints in rough repairs.

Then there was a roar of applause when the gun-boat's commander arose, glass in hand, to give the toast of the 'Two Races!'

'Round the world, where east joins west, we two meet,' he said. 'Sometimes we meet in anger; but we know each other good men in peace or war; and you show the seaman's spirit which belongs to both when you save us from the reef.'

Then Nixon stood up, a burly figure in white fur, with face that was bronzed and darkened rather by bitter spray and ice-blink than the pale northern sun. Stretching out a hard hand, he answered, 'It's your business to obey the Czar, and ours to kill the seals—where we can;

so we have our differences now and then. When you come in war we'll meet you with boat or rifle, equal man to man. Some of us have done it, and we don't take odds with you. The next best thing to a staunch friend is a good enemy; but when the worst comes, and you're corralled helpless, I guess you'll find us stand by you. Now we'll make the most of this armistice. May we have more friendly interludes in a worrying business!'

Again the glasses jingled to the shout, and the rest of the night was spent in harmony.

When, in the early daylight, the sealers took their departure, armed men were drawn up to do them honour; and one of the guests, who had feasted too royally, tearfully vowed eternal friendship with the Russian officers. As the *Islander* steamed out to sea the beaver-quartered ensign thrice fluttered to her peak and dipped again, and the boom of a Russian gun bade her farewell. Her crew were wild free-lances who rather defied than were subjects of any government; but that loud-voiced salute bore testimony that the bond of a common courage and humanity is greater in time of peril than any racial difference.

## THE VILLAGE CHURCH.

It stands, gray-towered and ivy-clad,  
The guardian of a peaceful spot;  
Heedless of ritualistic fad,  
As in old days of popish plot.  
And mark its years, for still below  
The mouldings of the porch are seen  
The smooth-worn grooves where long ago  
Stout bowmen made their arrows keen.

Here, through pre-Reformation glass,  
The slanting sunbeams from the west  
Show an esquire, on blackened brass,  
In richly blazoned tabard dressed;  
And there in stately solitude—  
Half-hidden in the chancel gloom,  
Whose tracery casts a light subdued—  
The Founder slumbers on his tomb.

Yonder in stone a Judge, whose life  
Was prosperous under good Queen Bess,  
Reposes by his lady-wife,  
Stiff in a flounced and brodered dress;  
While on the wall above their heads,  
Whither our eyes reluctant turn,  
A marble angel, stooping, sheds  
Her tears above a marble urn.

There lies, beyond the pulpit stair,  
A knight defaced by axe and blade,  
Whose simply-charged escutcheons bear  
The Cross of some remote Crusade,  
Haply where he has knelt we kneel,  
And tread where he trod as a boy  
In days before misguided zeal  
Taught Cromwell's Roundheads to destroy.

How changed, and yet how changeless too!  
We hearken to the self-same Word;  
And still that voice, unaltered through  
The lapse of centuries, is heard;  
And still the same unending fight  
Is waged by hosts sublime and strong,  
In faith unshaken, that the right  
Through all the world may crush the wrong.

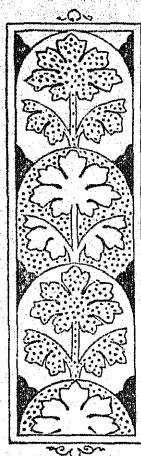
And here, as in the days of old,  
Sad hearts find something to inspire;  
Hearts that have borne like purest gold  
The fierce refining of the fire;  
And souls, that in the world have known  
The magic of temptation's power,  
Here, struggling silent and alone,  
Seek courage in their darkest hour.

And in the earth beneath its shade,  
Where sleeping generations lie,  
Still good and bad alike are laid,  
For good and bad alike must die;  
To rest unmoved by all around,  
Deaf to the ringing of the chimes,  
Unconscious of the drowsy sound  
Of bees at work among the limes.

So shall it stand while Time rolls on,  
Holding unnumbered secrets fast;  
Shall stand when we are dead and gone,  
Mere specks in the forgotten past;  
An heritage to young and old,  
To rich and poor a sacred trust,  
The Church, immortal, shall behold  
Our children's children turned to dust.

ROBERT COCHRANE.





# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### PARLIAMENTARY ANECDOTES OF SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT.

By WILLIAM SIDEBOTHAM.

**T**HE popular estimate of living statesmen is generally formed from the reports of their speeches which appear in the public press. Even in the case of those eminent politicians who have been honoured with biographies during their lifetime, such histories have invariably dealt only with public action and conduct, and throw little light on what has been said and done in the more secluded paths of life. This is partly due to the lack of anecdotal power in the mental constitution of our statesmen, many of whom have not the gift of clothing an ordinary incident in that dramatic form of expression which converts it into an anecdote. They, so to speak, lack the eye for the picturesque in individual life; and the resources of their experience have not been sufficiently rich and varied to supply incidents within their own knowledge to point a moral or to adorn a speech. The statesman who possessed this gift in the highest degree was undoubtedly Mr Gladstone; but Sir William Harcourt, his chief lieutenant in the House of Commons during the two last decades of that leader's political life, is not so deficient in this faculty as is generally supposed.

When Sir William Harcourt came prominently before the British public as a political orator, nearly a quarter of a century ago, his speeches were remarkable for their humour—a quality which he seems to have almost exhausted; but it was the humour of a caustic mind, which poured amusing ridicule upon whatever he was opposed to, not the humour of ordinary or of personal incident. Hence the anecdotes which can be recorded of him, although not numerous, throw much light on his political character, and are of greater interest on account of the conspicuous part he has taken in the science of government.

Emerging into the blaze of public life owing

to the brilliancy and humour of his earlier speeches, Sir William Harcourt has latterly distinguished himself as a critic of affairs ecclesiastical; and as such his writings and speeches have been sombre rather than entertaining. His career as an ecclesiastical politician began in connection with an incident which attracted considerable attention at the time, and is still of public interest, because of the duel that took place between him and Mr Gladstone, and the prediction of the Liberal leader respecting Sir William Harcourt at the close of the debate.

Towards the end of the session of 1874, when the Public Worship Regulation Bill came before the House of Commons, Mr Gladstone delivered a vigorous and animated speech against it. Sir William Harcourt, who had been Solicitor-General in Mr Gladstone's administration in the previous year, speaking in defence of the bill, remarked—in the presence of a full House, during the course of a debate which commanded the attention of the whole nation—that they had all been under the wand of 'the enchanter,' and had listened with rapt attention as he had 'poured forth the wealth of his incomparable eloquence.' Then Sir William added: 'As I listened with that admiration which we all share to the magnificent oration, I asked myself how the principles so enunciated can be reconciled with the principle upon which the National Church was founded.' Everything seemed to contribute to give prominence to this debate, and the following incident, though in itself comical, heightened the public interest. After Sir William Harcourt had concluded his speech, Mr Gathorne Hardy (now Lord Cranbrook) rose from the Government bench, and was proceeding to speak in defence of the bill, when an unexpected peal of laughter was heard. This was caused by the appearance of a large tabby cat, which was observed descending the Opposition gangway. In a moment the animal

became the cynosure of all eyes, and the excitement caused by the debate immediately gave place to unbounded merriment. The cat proceeded to walk in a stately manner across the floor of the House; but, evidently becoming frightened by the resounding mirth, the 'distinguished stranger' made a sudden spring over the shoulders of the members sitting on the front Ministerial bench below the gangway, and amid shouts of excitement bounded over the heads of members to the back benches until it reached the side door, when it disappeared. This sudden appearance of the cat, its more sudden departure, and the astonishment of members when it vaulted so close to their faces and beards, almost convulsed the House. Mr Gathorne Hardy, who was a man of resource in debate and apt in quotation, resumed his speech—which had been brought to a sudden termination by the antics of the animal—and said, amid much laughter, that Foxe in his *Book of Martyrs* related that the Synod of Dort was disturbed by the sudden appearance of an owl; and he was not surprised that the House was startled by the appearance of an animal which was certainly not regular in its attendance in the House.

The present House of Commons, after the lapse of a little over a quarter of a century, contains only about a dozen members who were present to hear that debate, which is still memorable on account of what Mr Gladstone said in reference to Sir William Harcourt at the close of the discussion. The latter renewed his refutation of Mr Gladstone's first attack on the bill on 5th August, and Sir William's speech on that occasion is noteworthy because of the following declaration: 'This,' he said, 'is not and never has been a very strong bill, and I fear that we shall commit an unstatesmanlike act in passing a small measure on a great subject. This matter—I do not say this bill—is far the largest business which has occupied parliament or the public mind in my lifetime. I always believed that this bill would break down upon the discretion of the Bishops, and I believe now that it will break down upon that point.' Mr Gladstone's final reply was mostly occupied with retorts on Sir William Harcourt. The latter, he said, 'has not yet sown his parliamentary wild-oats. After he has, I have not the slightest doubt he will combine with his ability—which no one sees with greater satisfaction than I do—temper and wisdom, and a due consideration for the feelings of others; strictness in restating arguments, the arguments of opponents; in fact, every political virtue that can distinguish a notability of parliament; and, if he persists in the course of study he has begun, a complete knowledge of ecclesiastical law.' The House received this chastened compliment with mingled feelings, and without too nicely discriminating whether it was sarcasm or commendation. This passage may now be read as a prediction rather than sarcasm.

In the present year, when the military resources of the Empire are being put to the test by the campaign in South Africa, it may be interesting to recall an incident which occurred in 1885, when the 'shadow of war' threatened our power in the Far East. In that year an encounter took place between some Russian and Afghan troops on the border of Afghanistan—an incident which was subsequently explained away as not being intended to alarm the people of England as to the aggressive intentions of Russia upon our Indian Empire; but the Liberal Government took the matter so much to heart, thereby reflecting the general sentiments of the English people, that they proposed a vote of credit for eleven millions sterling to prepare for war with Russia. When the question of making the necessary preparations began to be seriously discussed by the Government, the present Duke of Devonshire—then the Marquis of Hartington, who occupied the position of Secretary of State for War—asked Sir William Harcourt, the then Home Secretary, how many troops he would require to maintain order in the United Kingdom, so that he might know what would be the force available in the event of war with Russia. Sir William, whose mind, like that of Mr Gladstone, was understood to be much exercised at the time with the burning question of the government of Ireland, replied: 'If you will answer for the peace of Ireland, I will undertake to maintain order in England and Scotland without the aid of a single soldier.' The war in South Africa is the first one of any magnitude in which we have been involved since that discussion took place between these two statesmen; and the spontaneous enthusiasm of the British public in answering the call to arms gives additional pregnancy to Sir William Harcourt's reply.

Talking about South Africa reminds me of an incident which took place when, on the retirement of Mr Gladstone, Sir William became leader of the House of Commons. He was asked, shortly after the death of Lord Tennyson, when the Government intended to appoint another Poet-Laureate, and he remarked that he was content to reply in the words of the Roman poet: *Poeta nascitur, non fit*. Soon afterwards the Conservative party came into power, and a Poet-Laureate was appointed. Sir William Harcourt has on more than one occasion indicated his feelings in regard to that appointment. In the course of the first speech he delivered in the House of Commons after the Jameson Raid, he deprecated what he termed the vainglorious spirit in which the courage of those who had taken part in that movement had been applauded, remarking that that regrettable tone should be left to music-hall singers and Poet-Laureates. When Mr A. J. Balfour (who is a personal friend of Mr Austin, and who is understood to have had a good deal to do with the latter's appointment to the position of Poet-

Laureate) heard that observation his face fell, showing that the pleasantry had had its effect. Later on, when the circumstances of the Jameson Raid were investigated before a Select Committee, Sir William took a prominent part in the examination of the principal witnesses, and his legal acumen and subtle interrogations surprised even his most intimate friends. The searching questions he put to the witnesses who had been directly connected with the Raid, and also to those who had been in communication with the Reform leaders shortly before it took place, will long remain in the memory of those who were privileged to be present at what was *de facto*—although only designated by the name of a Select Committee—the greatest State trial since Warren Hastings was impeached. Much interest was aroused in the course of the proceedings in regard to a letter which was alleged to have been sent by the Reform leaders at Johannesburg to Dr Jameson, asking him to cross the border with the Chartered Company's troops which were under his control, in order to protect the women and children, who were represented to be in a position of great danger, owing to the threatening attitude of the Boer Government. This letter, it subsequently transpired, was in Dr Jameson's possession some time previously, to be used by him as the pretext for invading the Transvaal when things were ripe for the insurrection. Mr Rhodes also had a copy of the letter; and as soon as it was ascertained that Dr Jameson had entered the territory of the South African Republic, Mr Rhodes telegraphed it to Miss Flora Shaw, a correspondent of the *Times*, in order that it might be published in that journal. When Miss Shaw was called to give evidence a good many questions were put to her in reference to this letter, and Sir William Harcourt pressed her with the object of ascertaining whether she really believed it to be genuine. The witness replied, 'I believed it entirely;' whereupon Sir William dryly observed, 'You believed it in common with the Poet-Laureate'—a remark which caused considerable amusement, as it was felt to be another sly hit at Mr Balfour and Mr Austin.

Sir William Harcourt has repeatedly referred to the experience he gained while holding the office of Home Secretary as having modified some of his views on social and economic questions. On one occasion he told the House that shortly after he became the head of the Home Department a case was brought before him in which a man who had been convicted of crime and sentenced to penal servitude was subsequently stated to be innocent. The representations made so impressed the Home Secretary that he caused investigations to be made, which resulted in proving the innocence of the man, who had been in prison for some time. Sir William added that further inquiry showed that on a previous occasion the same individual had been convicted and sent to prison for another offence of which he was eventually proved to be

blameless. It thus appeared that this man had twice received Her Majesty's pardon for crimes he had been charged with but had not committed. Sir William impressed the House with the fact that, notwithstanding the ability and care which English judges brought to bear on the cases that came before them, serious mistakes sometimes occurred, requiring careful revision by the Home Office.

It is not generally known that Sir William Harcourt has varied tastes and has extensive knowledge of subjects other than politics. He takes a keen interest in landscape gardening; and although he does not, like Mr Chamberlain, make a practice of wearing a flower in his button-hole, he personally superintends the arrangement and management of his garden. He also takes an interest in art; and in this connection he once amused the House by telling an incident which he seemed to regard as instructive. Some years ago he was present in Christy's salerooms—the finest of the kind in London—inspecting a collection of pictures which were on view, and was much impressed by the portrait of the first Whig prime-minister of England, painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds. After examining the picture, Sir William asked an expert who was with him what it would be likely to realise, and was told that if it had been the portrait of an unknown lady it would probably sell for four thousand or five thousand pounds, female portraits by the great artist being always in much request; but as it was that of a prime-minister whose name was familiar, it would probably not fetch more than six hundred or seven hundred pounds. Sir William was at the time leader of the House of Commons, and was then looked upon as the political successor of Mr Gladstone. The House enjoyed the irony of the story, especially the leading members of the Opposition. Sir William joined in the merriment; and when an Opposition member asked across the table what was the sum the picture sold for, the First Lord of the Treasury replied, with a smile, 'Six hundred and fifty pounds,' and added that the incident showed that there was no standard value whereby property could be judged on its merits for purposes of probate-duty. In this connection he has been heard to state that in his earlier years, while travelling in the Highlands with Lord John Russell and other friends, they were one day crossing a Scotch loch; and in course of some conversation with a boatman, from whom they were trying to elicit information as to his views on the beauty of the surrounding landscape, the man assured them that the water of the loch had a special value. When asked to explain what it was, he remarked that it had the reputation of making the finest toddy in Scotland.

Sir William Harcourt has repeatedly expressed the admiration he felt in earlier years for sojourns in the Highlands. Over twenty years ago it was



his favourite holiday haunt, and sometimes he has drawn apt similes from his knowledge of Highland life and manners. About a dozen years ago the House of Commons was discussing the action of Irish resident magistrates, and it was alleged that they would do whatever the Government required of them. Sir William also took part in the debate, and in referring to this point declared that the Irish magistrate was like the Highland shepherd's collie, which could tell by a glance of its master's eye and without any word of command what it was required to do—an observation which immensely pleased the Irish Nationalists.

It is fairly well known that Sir William Harcourt's grandfather was Archbishop of York, and that his father was the Rev. William Vernon Harcourt, of Nuneham Park, Oxfordshire, a canon of York. It is not, however, generally known that for several years in the eighties Sir William was one of the few members who had a brother a member of parliament—Colonel Harcourt. The latter, despite his physical resemblance to Sir William, differed from him both in habits and in tastes. He was a strong supporter of the Conservative party; and, although regular in his attendance at the House, he seldom delivered a speech. His military bearing and his reticence gave the impression that he was more at home in the camp than in the library. On one occasion, during a discussion in the House, a question was raised, as a by-point, on the influence of kinship upon politics; and Sir William caused some amusement, especially among the members of the Opposition, by stating with much gravity, from the Government bench, that his experience was that brothers did not always hold the same political opinions. When Colonel Harcourt died, the distinction of a minister having a brother on the opposite side of the House fell to Mr E. Stanhope, since deceased. It may be mentioned, in passing, that Sir William Harcourt has a son whose ability and knowledge are so marked that he is likely to maintain the commanding reputation of the family in State affairs for many years to come.

Sir William Harcourt's admiration for Mr Gladstone was unbounded, and he has frequently given expression to that feeling in public; and in this connection I remember an incident which struck me at the time as showing most significantly Sir William's appreciation of the deceased statesman. For some years after the Home Rule split Sir William delivered a number of speeches in the provinces attacking his personal friend and quondam colleague, Mr Chamberlain. Although these utterances, which were in his best swashbuckling style, caused considerable amusement, the public did not seem to be much impressed by his herculean efforts. His great chief, Mr Gladstone, took a different course, and no one seemed to appreciate his finesse more than Sir William. Mr

Gladstone only alluded to Mr Chamberlain on rare occasions, and then very briefly. In the course of an animated debate in the House of Commons one evening, Mr Chamberlain delivered a speech from the front Opposition bench in which he strongly defended the policy and attitude of the Liberal Unionists. Mr Gladstone, who was sitting on the same bench, listened attentively to Mr Chamberlain's observations. When his former colleague had resumed his seat he instantly rose, and, taking the place just vacated, for about five minutes gently taunted Mr Chamberlain regarding his consistency on political questions, comparing his attitude then with what it was in former years. The great Commoner did this in such a mild and gentle way that there was a constant ripple of laughter among the rank and file of the Radical party; but it seemed to send Sir William Harcourt into paroxysms of delight. As he listened to the skilful and at the same time graceful performances of his leader his face beamed; but later he was unable to conceal his ecstasy, for his whole body seemed, as it were, to heave. He put his hand over his face, and next folded his arms over his breast, giving way at the same time to uncontrollable laughter. The House regarded this as one of Mr Gladstone's finest efforts of the kind; and what made it more remarkable was the fact that it was done on the spur of the moment. No artist could do justice to the varied expressions of the countenances of Mr Gladstone's colleagues.

About two years ago Mr Chamberlain made what in the House of Commons is regarded as an undignified remark, and as indicating a lack of argumentative resource—a rather uncommon occurrence for the Colonial Secretary. Although, when interrupted by rude observations, he can give a crushing retort, as some of the Irish members have found to their cost, he seldom deviates from the unwritten code of parliamentary etiquette. On the occasion referred to he taunted Sir William Harcourt by saying, 'We don't all find time to write out our speeches;' and as the passage occurred in a rather feeble reply it was the more remarkable. It is usual for members to deliver their speeches either quite extemporaneously or with the aid of a few notes; yet it is not considered any disparagement for even a leading politician to write out his speech, so long as it is strictly appropriate to the subject under discussion. The late Mr W. H. Smith, when occupying the position of leader of the House, seldom delivered an important speech which he had not first written out. Sir William Harcourt has stated that he is fond of controversy, and as a controversialist some of his most effective retorts have been extempore; but as a rule on great occasions he writes out his speeches, and never tries to conceal the fact that he has done so. In the earlier years of his parliamentary career it was his habit to prepare his speeches very carefully,

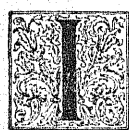
both for the House and the country ; but, whereas formerly he stuck very closely to his manuscript (although his audience did not know it), in later years whole pages have been disregarded, and he has inserted passages which in the quietness of his study he had not thought of. A quarter of a century ago some of his speeches were feats of memory as well as of political oratory. It is known to his intimate friends of that time that every phrase in the addresses he then delivered was the result of mature reflection ; and he has repeatedly, in addressing large public meetings, delivered speeches which he had almost word for word in manuscript in his pocket.

Sir William Harcourt always acted with the greatest loyalty to Mr Gladstone. He was the Rupert in debate, ever ready and resourceful in defending his revered chief from the violent attacks which were made upon him, especially

during the Home Rule controversy. Since Mr Gladstone's death, however, it is well known that his relations with his colleagues have become somewhat strained, owing to various causes ; and as a consequence his speeches, except on rare occasions, have lacked that fire which was a distinguishing characteristic of his earlier efforts. Nevertheless, it is universally admitted that he is still one of the most striking figures in parliament ; and if he decides to leave the political arena, as some prophesy he will at no distant date—and his irregular attendance at the House of Commons during the last session gives colour to the prognostication—his retirement would be regretted by the members of both political parties. A connecting-link with the past, which it would be impossible to replace, would thus be severed, and parliamentary oratory would lose one of its ablest exponents.

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

### CHAPTER XXVI.—HIS EXCELLENCY CREATES A SENSATION.



LED the way to Macpherson's cabin and unlocked the door. Lepard lurched round as he always did, so that his back was turned towards us. But Vaurel took him by the shoulder, and rolled him over in

order to give the Governor a good view of his scowling face and sullen eyes.

'The hair on his face alters him considerably. But it is he,' he said.

'Colonel Lepard'—he touched the Colonel's shoulder with his finger-tips—'I arrest you in the name of the Republic you have betrayed. I will send for you.'

'We will not take him with us,' he said as we were leaving the room. 'It would only spoil madame's happiness at meeting her brother.'

'I think I ought perhaps to tell your Excellency that Gaston spent the evening before last on board here with us,' I said.

'What?' he cried again, as though doubting his ears.

'You see, Denise was absolutely pining for a sight of her brother, so we went ashore and brought him off, and he spent the evening with us.'

He threw back his head and laughed loud and long, and I wondered what Colonel Lepard thought he was laughing at.

'This is a ship of surprises,' he said at last. 'Have you anything else to tell me? I'd better have it all at once.'

'I can tell you one more thing. It may or may not surprise your Excellency. You want Colonel Lepard for—I don't know what you will call it exactly—but for putting away Gaston des Comptes. He is guilty of another crime—I won't

say a graver one. He murdered his accomplice, Captain Zuyler, in the woods at Cour-des-Comptes, by beating in his head with an iron bar. Vaurel witnessed it.'

'What a scoundrel he is!' said His Excellency. 'I can readily believe that of him. It is exactly what one would expect that kind of man to do if he thought the other was going to round on him.'

'That was it exactly. But there is Denise awaiting us in the boat.'

'Come along, Vaurel, *mon ami*,' said the Governor, catching his anxious eye. 'We shall want you on shore. Certainly, bring the dog too, if he won't eat any of my people.'

'You are a most amazing set of people on board that yacht,' he said to Denise as the launch carried us swiftly up the harbour ; 'if you were going to make a long stay here, I should be afraid you would turn the island upside down.'

'I am very thankful it has all come out right. I was sure it would, but I did not see how it was going to,' she said.

'And if it hadn't you would have helped it ; is it not so, cousin?'

'I don't see how we could. We did our best, but the Colonel would not open his mouth.'

'And why would he not open his mouth?'

'I suppose because he knew we so much wanted him to,' she said.

'I see. There is a good deal yet to be told evidently, M. Lamont.'

'You shall have the whole story whenever your Excellency says the word.'

'And, meanwhile, let me see. You brought Lepard out here on the yacht. You took Gaston

out to the yacht, and then returned him to his prison. Why on earth did you not exchange them, and carry Gaston away, leaving the other in his place?

'Well, to tell the truth, that was Vaurel's idea of what we ought to do, and on the face of it, it wasn't a bad idea; but there was one difficulty.'

'And that was?'—

'Gaston. He would not hear of it.'

'Of course he wouldn't,' said Denise. 'I told you all so the moment I heard of it.'

'He wouldn't go?' said the Governor.

'He flatly refused, and was somewhat hurt that any one could have considered him capable of such a thing.'

'Well, well, there are not many like him. And he has stood it all these months. He is a brave boy.'

'You will let him go home with us in the yacht, Cousin Godefroi?' asked Denise.

'Assuredly! I am instructed to procure him passage back to France, and he could not go quicker or better than with you. Will you take the other one too?'

'Horrors, no! I never want to see him, or hear of him, or think of him again. Relieve us of him as soon as you can, I beg of you.'

'Will you send him home?' I asked.

'I shall cable for instructions from Sydney. Possibly they would sooner not have him back, and will instruct me to put him away here. They will be glad to hear we have got him safe. What are you going to do with that hundred thousand francs, Vaurel, *mon gars*?'

'I have not got it yet, Excellency,' said Vaurel, with a broad smile.

'But you shall have it, my friend, or my name's not De la Rocherelle. You wouldn't like to stop here and help me to keep my black sheep in their folds, would you?'

'No, Excellency, I thank you! I would sooner help some of the least black to get out. I have had enough of keeping prisoners, and I was in prison once myself—in Prussia, you know,' he added quickly—'and I know what it feels like.'

We hardly knew Gaston when he met us on the veranda of the Governor's house. He was clipped and shaved, and dressed in a captain's uniform, which the Governor had borrowed from one of his aides, and he looked very different from the unkempt and roughly-clad prisoner of two nights before. But he was Denise's Gaston, and the greeting between them was from the depths of their hearts.

We sat and talked with great content on the Governor's veranda all the afternoon. We told His Excellency all our story, and he enjoyed it greatly; and whenever he thought of Gaston coolly spending his evening on the yacht he laughed heartily.

'When you tell your adventures I think you must suppress that part, for my sake,' he said, 'or they will be thinking at home that our discipline is somewhat lax—which, indeed, it is, but there is no need to rub the fact into them. It's quite bad enough for the poor devils to be here at all.'

Then the guests arrived—a colonel, a major, two or three captains, and several lieutenants, accompanied by their wives, so far as they were possessed of them. They could not quite make out how Gaston's sister had arrived on the scene so opportunely, and were puzzled at her cousinship to the Governor, which implied a similar relationship on Gaston's part, of which they had had no previous idea.

They praised the beauty of the yacht, spoke enthusiastically of the way the men rowed the gig, and were amazed when they learned that we had actually come all the way from France in that very small ship.

The ladies eyed Denise's frock with keen curiosity, and questioned her closely, but with perfect politeness, as to the latest Paris fashions. They said what a perfectly charming dog Boulot was, but did not offer to touch him; and the men looked somewhat askance at him, and said that his high breeding was very apparent. Boulot sat with his shoulders up in his ears, panted heavily, and snuffled the dust out of his nose so violently that they were in a state of perpetual uneasiness, under the impression that he was about to make an unprovoked attack upon them.

They all vied with one another in courteous congratulations to Gaston on his rehabilitation. They hoped he had not found his sojourn on the island over trying, and wished they were in his shoes, going back to Paris, to the warm heart of the mother-country. They sighed for Paris, for the Boulevards, the cafés, the theatres, the fashions, the scandals. Paris contained everything that made life worth living, and here were they withering amid the dust, and the heat, and the galvanised iron roofs, and the last year's fashions, and all the news months old.

'There might be half-a-dozen revolutions and we never hear a word of it,' said the gray little Major. 'I wonder if they've caught that rascal Lepard yet. We may not hear of it for months.'

'If ever they catch him at all,' said the Colonel. 'He is a very clever man in his way is Colonel Lepard, and he's not to be caught napping, if I know anything of his character.'

'You knew him, M. le Colonel?' asked one of the lieutenants ingratiatingly.

'I have fought beside him, and he was a very great fighter, but not a man to like—an awful bully with his men. How they did hate him!'

'Eh, bien! M. le Colonel,' said his Excel-



lency, 'for once we shall get ahead of Paris, and you shall have news for which Paris is hungering.'

There was an expectant silence round the table, and all their eyes were fixed on him.

'Monsieur Lepard is here,' he said impressively, and a thrill ran round the guests. 'M. Lamont has been so good as to bring him to us on his yacht, as a prisoner.'

They could hardly take it all in, and as for understanding it, that was quite out of the question; but, once they were sure it was not one of His Excellency's jokes, their tongues wagged furiously, the air being thick with expletives and exclamations, and they were very greatly excited, and very much elated at turning the tables on Paris for once.

His Excellency had so greatly enjoyed the ripple he had created that he tried again.

'Moreover,' he said, 'Monsieur Lepard has still another crime to answer for. Did any of you know Captain Zuyler?'

'He was in Algiers with me,' said the Major. 'He was killed by a lunatic down in Bretagne just the other day.'

'He was the accomplice of this Lepard,' said the Governor, 'and it was Lepard who killed him with his own hands. I have the witness here, and the proofs on the spot will be unanswerable, I understand.'

His Excellency had reason to be amply satisfied with the sensation he had produced, and for once the members of his staff had something to talk about beyond the narrow limits of their island life, and they swelled big whenever they remembered that Paris was all in the dark, and that this extraordinary news was so far theirs alone.

*(To be continued.)*

## A QUESTION OF INDUSTRIAL SUPREMACY.

By JAMES BURNLEY, Author of *The Romance of Invention*, &c.

**I**S Great Britain's industrial supremacy past or passing? This is a question that perhaps can be better answered from without than from within, and more effectively from the United States, where I write this article, than from any other country; for it is in America that the greatest efforts are being made to supplant the British in the markets of the world.

Within the last twenty years the industrial condition in the States has been greatly changed. During that period the importation into the country of iron and steel, raw or manufactured, has fallen from fourteen million pounds to two million four hundred thousand pounds; while the exportation of these articles exactly reverses the story, showing an increase from two million four hundred thousand pounds to fourteen million pounds.

Twenty years ago many of the leading positions in American manufacturing concerns were held by Englishmen; to-day English manufacturers are engaging Americans to aid in the direction of their enterprises. An old established iron and coal company in the north of England, for example, recently advertised for a manager, and it was expressly stipulated that he must be an American. In South Africa, before the outbreak of the war with the Boers, there were hundreds of American engineers employed, many of whom had made fortunes. Some of Russia's largest industrial establishments are under the direction of Americans; and, as we know to our cost, Americans are daily securing important contracts not only in those foreign countries where hitherto English skill and enterprise have largely predominated, but in Great

Britain itself and her colonies, where, if the offers of competition were anything like equal, it is to be presumed that the British contractor would be granted the preference.

In all these instances it is clear that the Americans possess some controlling advantage over their European rivals, whom they no longer follow but lead in certain industries; and it is worth while attempting to solve the problem that this deduction involves. So far, probably, the advantage is of a special and limited rather than of a general character; but in industrial expansion, as in other things, the tendency is for that which is special to become general by natural process of development. The advantages, whatever they may be—whether in natural resources, economic superiority, machinery, skill, protective influences, management, conditions of labour, combination of capital, or what else—that have enabled Americans to wrest big contracts from native firms in regard to the installation of electricity, the building of bridges, the supply of locomotives, and other matters, will inevitably enable them to make further headway in quarters where British products and British skill have up to now held chief sway, unless our home establishments are maintained in a condition to offer successful competition at all points.

The industrial alarmist reads in these signs of American advancement the funeral knell of British supremacy; and in the States it is very generally believed that the progress of the last twenty years, which has served to bring American manufacturers abreast with foreign competition, will be continued at the same rate in the future, and that before long foreign markets will be completely conquered, giving America the

leading position, with the rest of the world nowhere.

However, both the British alarmist and the American trade optimist fail to consider all the elements of the position. The national characteristics which have enabled England to lead so long in the industrial race—its inventive genius, its skill, intelligence, and enterprise, its capacity for plodding, and its dogged persistence—are no more likely to fail her in the future than she is likely to lose the advantages of her insular position, or her maritime greatness, or her commanding position as the world's banker. Nothing has happened in the world's industrial developments that might not have been foreseen, apart from the natural surprises of the greater inventive achievements, which have been mainly to the credit and advantage of Great Britain. What has occurred in America and elsewhere has been indicative of the general progress of the human race and the advancement of nations rather than of any deterioration in British skill, enterprise, or resources. While the great mechanical inventions which were either originated or received their most active support in England were not as yet adopted or but slightly utilised in other countries, there could be no disputing of British industrial supremacy, no check to her commercial prosperity; but it was not in the nature of things that the use of labour-saving contrivances could for long be monopolised by England or the few other nations that competed with her. These things had to be spread over the world, and neither their use nor their manufacture could remain a matter of restriction; and that the United States, with its immense population, its indomitable energy, its hunger for wealth, its splendid capacity for work, and its unequalled and exhaustless mineral resources, should gradually push itself into the position of England's chief industrial competitor, was as natural as that a child should grow to be a man, or that one generation of industrial kings should be succeeded by another and more active generation.

America stands where it does to-day in the world of industry as the result of a natural growth rather than because of the possession of superior ability. Energy has accomplished more for America than genius has; and the desire to grow rich quickly has had more to do with bringing that energy into play than anything else, as it has also been a principal factor in the lowering of the tone of public and municipal life in that great country. This energy rides roughshod over all obstacles, is often unscrupulous, and nearly always intensely selfish; but, as the Americans say, it 'gets there,' and that is what they are aiming at.

In our own country we do not rush things at this break-neck pace; there is a little more repose in our national character. Therefore we are occasionally outdistanced by this young and fear-

less competitor, so strong in his pride of youth and dollars, so boastful of his achievements, so determined to forge ahead. Still, we also 'get there' sometimes; and, given a fair field—without hostile protective tariffs to battle with at every stage—and no favour, even America, with all its magnificent resources and energy, would yet be some time before it caught up with us at all points of the race. There is no reason, however, why America should not do her utmost to oust us not only from her own markets, where we have so long and honourably and profitably been pre-eminent, but in all other markets where by superiority of any kind, or by cheapness, she can establish herself. It is for the advantage of the nations that it should be so.

Meanwhile, it may be asked, what becomes of Great Britain's industrial supremacy? If it has to be upheld it will not be by jealousy of American effort or by fear of American skill, but by a firm reliance on native intelligence, a better scientific training for those destined for industrial pursuits, a lessening of the strain betwixt the contending interests of capital and labour, and a fuller realisation of the altered conditions of competition which American industrial progress has brought about.

We now come to consider by what special skill, methods, or enterprise America has accomplished the great things that direct such close attention to her industrial development in these days. Do these achievements portend the industrial capitulation of the nations of Europe and the reduction of British industries to a position of second rank? Not at all. Germany, Russia, Belgium, France, Italy, have all made wonderful progress in manufactures of every kind while the United States has been building up her industrial house, and can to a much greater extent than formerly supply their own wants.

No other country has enjoyed such a clear course for industrial expansion as America. Most of the obstacles that have beset the path of trade development in England have not had to be reckoned with by our transatlantic cousins. England has seldom achieved an important progressive step in that mechanical expansion which made her the first of industrial nations without having had to contend with violent opposition. She, more than any other country, has had to fight the battles of industrial liberty. The manufacture of textiles prior to the inventions of Arkwright, Crompton, Kay, and Hargreaves was a household industry carried on in conjunction with agriculture; and as each labour-saving invention was introduced it was fiercely opposed by the working-classes, and was frequently the cause of riot and bloodshed. The same attitude, though in a less violent degree, prevails to this day against the adoption of improved tools. English inventors and English employers have all along had bitter opposition to battle with, while in America there has been

comparatively little of this kind of conflict to retard the enlargement of the sphere of the machine. Furthermore, there have been fewer of those disorganising influences which disputes between capital and labour have engendered in older countries; so that the Americans have mainly had to concern themselves with the practical adoption of the mechanical inventions of the Old World, their improvement, and their successful operation under a system of protection that has to a great extent shut other nations out from competition in the American market.

Whether the American people at large have benefited from these conditions is open to doubt; and still more doubtful is it whether under any circumstances the American manufacturer can have such a clear run in the future. Labour has in recent years begun to organise itself in the States, and the course of the employer is threatened with obstacles that seldom presented themselves twenty years ago. Strikes are now numerous in America, and they attain proportions and involve dangers that can hardly be realised in England.

What with monopoly—in the form of gigantic trusts and combinations, crushing the life out of smaller enterprises, and generally increasing the prices of products—and the aggressive stand which the various labour unions are taking to obtain for the workman a fuller share of the profits of his work, American industry has breakers ahead that may cause serious trouble. The position of the great combinations is so strong, however—they are so rich and powerful—that it is not a slight shock that can disturb them. The great strike at the Homestead Works, Pittsburg, a few years ago, for the time seemed as if it would rend a famous industrial organisation; yet the difficulty was patched up, and last year this same enterprise earned over four million pounds profit for its proprietors. In Chicago, for several months past, the labour troubles have been of a serious kind, many thousands of workmen being on strike most of the time in obedience to the orders of their unions, and tactics have been resorted to on the part of the strikers that recall in some of their features the terrible events of the Sheffield strikes in which the notorious Broadhead cut such a fiendish figure.

These are the shadows that now play around the otherwise sunny path of the American industrial captains, and they grow deeper as the months go by. Should a time of quick panic arrive, a storm might burst that it would not be easy to allay. Protection is the father of monopoly, and monopoly is the parent of greed; and whether the governing powers ultimately prove strong enough to curb the further growth of this evil, or whether it will be allowed to fatten itself until giant labour has to rise against it and cripple it, remains to be seen.

America may be trusted, however, to deal with

a crisis when it arises. Public spirit and patriotism are important factors in the settlement of difficulties of all kinds in the States; and when sacrifices are necessary they can be made. Therefore, in spite of the multiplication of trade obstacles by which the country is threatened and already suffers from to some extent, there need be no apprehension of any serious break in the general industrial prosperity. The people are adaptable.

It is generally supposed that the Americans are much better equipped with labour-saving appliances, especially in the larger steel and iron works, than their English rivals; and there is some truth in this. Not that Englishmen have not the command of the same kinds of appliances, not that they do not use them, but that the Americans utilise them to a much larger degree. Whatsoever machinery can perform to aid manual labour or take the place of it, that it is set to do in America, and as many men are set to work on any particular job as that job can possibly accommodate; hence they arrive at two important results—cheapness of production and rapidity of operation. The story goes that an American manufacturer of steam specialities, visiting an English maker of the same class of goods, pointed to a certain article and asked, 'What is your price on this thing?' 'About nineteen dollars in your money,' replied the Englishman. 'What does it cost you?' 'I'll deliver at your doors all you want at seven dollars apiece,' said the American. 'How in the world do you do it?' inquired the Englishman. 'Well, I'll illustrate,' answered the American. 'You see that man across the street painting a sign. He's on a ladder—isn't he?—and there's another man on the side-walk holding the foot of the ladder. 'Yes.' 'Well, in America we have ladders that stand up by themselves—don't need a man to hold 'em. So, you see, in this instance we divide the cost of labour exactly by two. That's how we do it.'

Why did Americans get the contract for the erection of the Atbara Bridge for facilitating the movements of Kitchener's troops in the Soudan? Because an American firm undertook to construct the bridge in seven weeks, while the English contractors required seven months. In the same way the Baldwin Locomotive Works at Philadelphia received an order for engines for our Great Northern Railway for the reason that they could supply them in four months, whereas English houses asked eighteen months. When the Glasgow Corporation accepted an American bid for installing electricity on the street-car lines of that city, and the bid of other American firms for the steel work of the electric-power station, and for the engines, it was not because native work would not have been preferred, but simply for reasons of cheapness and quickness, as in the other cases. Similar reasons led to the employment almost exclusively of American firms and material in the



equipment of London's latest underground electrical railway, involving an outlay of upwards of three million pounds.

It is mainly by the effective utilisation of their many labour-saving devices that the Americans get in ahead of us. The displacements of labour incident to their introduction in English operations do not arise, inasmuch as the industries using them are often of recent enough organisation to admit of their starting with such an equipment. It is in this direction more than any other that British workers have to move if they are to have equal chances with the Americans. The Pittsburg firm that engaged to supply the steel work of the electric-power station at Glasgow bid seventy thousand pounds below the lowest British tender, notwithstanding the heavy handicap of ocean transportation. The Americans likewise underbid us in rails and galvanised wires for the Cape, in rails and cannon for the Russians, and in other instances too numerous to mention. In May of this year an American ship carried to Russia a cargo of 8640 tons of steel rails, invoiced at twenty-one dollars a ton. Lord Cromer, in his recent report of the financial situation in Egypt, remarks upon the use of American locomotives in the Soudan, and exactly explains the position as between British and American makers. The order for American locomotives and wagons was simply due to the fact, he writes, 'that the American firms, while not in a position to tender more favourable terms than others on our designs, almost invariably offered engines or wagons on standards of their own at lower prices and in less time.'

American invention is at the present moment more active than that of any other country in the working out of contrivances for dispensing with hand-labour, and unless England keeps pace with this active development she cannot expect to retain her old position in the world's markets. At the present time there is trouble in Chicago and other cities of the States in consequence of the introduction of an automatic facing tool used in the marble and stone yards, and another tool that can take the place of the mallet and chisel in fine work. The operator grasps a handpiece and presses the tool to the face of the stone; air is admitted to the plunger in response to the pressure, and twenty thousand blows a minute can be struck, while a man cannot swing a heavy hammer continuously more than thirty times a minute. A painting machine that is now widely used was invented by Mr Frank D. Millet when at work on the Chicago Exposition buildings. Finding it impossible to get the painting work done in time by the ordinary process, he devised a machine that was capable of covering with paint thirty-one thousand five hundred square feet per day. There was the usual fight with the unions before he was permitted to bring the machine into operation, but he eventually conquered, and one

man and a machine can now do the work that it previously took many men to do. By this new tool a man can paint a coal-car in fifteen minutes.

In the iron and steel trades labour-saving contrivances are of wonderful efficiency in America. The iron ore mined at Lake Superior is carried to the ore docks and dumped into the holds of steamers at a cost of only a few cents a ton. A great deal of it is quarried by steam-shovels and emptied directly into the cars, no human muscle being exerted from the time the shovel scrapes the ore from its native bed until the cargo reaches the lower lake-ports, whence it is sent to the smelters. A new shovel has just been introduced for handling the ore in the unloading, capable of transferring 1500 tons per day, with the employment of only three men.

It is the same in every branch of industry. The labour-saving inventor is pushing ahead 'all the time.' In the great drainage-canal recently completed in Chicago at a cost of over seven million pounds, fifty-six air-compressors were used to take out twelve million cubic yards of solid rock. Had the Panama Canal promoters had the appliances and engineering skill which were brought into use on the Chicago drainage-canal, the great waterway that was the dream and the downfall of De Lesseps could have been easily constructed with the money he had at command.

Every new development is met with the old stock-argument—the destruction of labour; but this plea is not pressed so aggressively as in former times. The introduction of a labour-saving device must necessarily have the effect of depriving certain men of accustomed employment, and for the time these men suffer a hardship. It does not take long, however, to readjust this temporary dislocation. Instead of many men at low wages, a few men at higher wages and with shorter hours find employment; and soon the cheapening of the article, consequent on the improved method, induces an increased demand and consumption, and in time a greater number of men than ever are employed. The general recognition of this fact in America tends considerably to the avoidance of strikes against machinery, which are simply strikes against human progress.

It is a marvellous story, this, of the development of industry in the United States. Modest enough were its beginnings; but when once the pioneers of American industry came to realise the wide range of the country's possibilities and the strength of its natural position, all their energy was devoted to the task of some day getting even with England in the race for industrial superiority. That it has done this in certain directions already cannot be disputed. That it will extend this advantage is probable; but that Great Britain will cease to be industrially great, or that the manufactures of any other nation

will surpass ours in our own special lines is no more to be expected than our general degeneracy as a race.

Apart from the mere question of industrial activity, energy, and ability, the splendid mineral resources of America are a natural advantage that for centuries to come will be a prominent factor in the sum of her manufacturing greatness. Until last year the United Kingdom led the United States in coal production. In 1870 our coal product was 123,682,935 tons as against an output of 36,806,560 in the States. In 1899 the United States produced 244,000,000 tons, and the United Kingdom 234,000,000 tons. Backed up by its mighty coal resources, America is building up a great industrial record, and in manufactures of every description expansion is being rushed at a rapid rate. It is this abundance of cheap coal that has enabled America to show such a marvellous increase in the production, manufacture, and exportation of metals. In 1889 manufactures of metals formed less than 20 per cent. of the total exportation of manufactures, while to-day they amount to about 45 per cent. The increase in this branch of exports in the decade 1889-98 was 339 per cent., while the increase in the exportation of all manufactures during that period was but 110 per cent., and of manufactures other than those of metal only 55 per cent.

The South, not long ago an exclusively agricultural region, is fast becoming the home of the cotton manufacture as well as of cotton culture, and in all the lower grades of goods has for some years not only been cutting under the English fabric-maker, but has been disputing leadership with its own countrymen in New England. In

fact, many Northern manufacturers have migrated South during the last five years, and machinery is pouring into the old slave states at a surprising rate. In the twelve Southern states where the cotton manufacture has been more or less established there were in August 1898 a total of 3,670,290 spindles, and since that period, up to the 1st of April 1900, additional enterprises have been projected in the South by which an increase of at least 35 per cent. is assured.

Still, great a country as the United States is, and rapid as is its industrial growth, there is one point of supremacy that Great Britain will possibly not have to relinquish for some time to come, and that is its capacity for excelling in the higher qualities of its manufactured products. In the magnitude of its operations, in the construction of certain articles made from iron and steel, and for its many mechanical improvements America stands high in the world's regard, and justly so. Its achievements have been on a marvellous scale. In the finer textile work, however, and in most of those special processes where quality and durability of product count rather than bulk, the Old World still surpasses the New, and will doubtless continue to do so a few years longer. When America has outlived protection and brought her gigantic trust undertakings into line with the demands of international fairness and the best interests of her own people, it may be that she will be able to assume the position of the leading industrial nation; but, it must be conceded, she has much to accomplish before this supreme point can be reached—many rough places to make smooth, many conquests over internal difficulties to win, many prejudices to overcome.

## THE SILVER LOTAH.

IN FOUR PARTS.—PART IV.



THE village of Yusufghât showed itself to Colonel Matthias in full daylight against the sky as he climbed—the masterless horse behind him—out of the last intervening valley. The men had scattered to their maize-growing and goat-tending on the lower slopes of the mountains, and only the women and babies huddled to stare at the stranger. Matthias dismounted, searching for words in which to frame an inquiry, and then paused as he saw the children scamper at the outskirts of the crowd.

There, advancing towards him, were two men of imposing carriage and feature, in whose mountaineer's attire, with its sheepskin-coat and bristling girdle, Matthias recognised the characteristic dress of the wild tribes living beyond the Indian frontier. That they were strange even to the people of the border village Matthias

learnt from the way the crowd scattered and finally melted away altogether at their glance. The new-comers advanced and saluted the Colonel, searching him with their keen eyes, and taking note, as he saw, of his mount, his bearing, and his pale and travel-stained face. The riderless horse behind him came in for a share of the scrutiny, and one of them, after examining its rowelled sides and inspecting the empty saddle, slipped his hand through the bridle and took possession.

'The servants of the thing with many eyes salute the messenger,' said one of the men. 'What news of the Khan's daughter? Alan sahib we thought to see, but he is not here: Nathoo we feared to meet; but'—he looked at the horse—'perhaps he will be feared no more. What news?'

'Alan Black is dead,' said Matthias. 'Nathoo is dead. There is no one left; and the woman

of whom you speak sends the silver lotah to you, and renders homage to her kinsman, Uzr Khan.'

The two men uttered a simultaneous exclamation, and their faces gleamed; it was evident that the message, though it surprised them, was a piece of welcome news. They turned to each other with sparkling eyes, and with a rapid flow of language in a dialect of which the Colonel could only understand a word here and there. He gathered that they were profoundly astonished and relieved by the turn affairs had taken.

'The lotah protects its own,' said the other man. 'Did not Uzr Khan say so, brother? He has ruled wisely and well, and he has his reward: there will be no more talk of fools and knaves to sit in the place of his fathers, to beget fools and knaves who could hold his son's heritage. And now, sahib, we would hear your news.'

'Peace!' said the first speaker. 'The sahib has rendered a great service, and he is weary from his work. Let him rest first, until he chooses to speak with us.'

Matthias, however, was anxious to return to Phulgarh. The village promised poor hospitality, and the thought of Mrs Black and her dead son was still uppermost in his mind. He told his story briefly, and begged for a pony on which to cover the first stage of the return journey. But first he surrendered the silver lotah.

The guardians of the lotah took it reverently, and Matthias noticed that they shut it inside a richly-chased silver box, into which it fitted with an exactness that suggested it had found its long-denied home. One of the men looked up as he snapped the lid upon it, and caught the expression in Matthias's eyes.

'Yes, it is a strange thing, a great mystery, sahib,' he said—'so profound a mystery that, after a little, men forget and disbelieve the power it holds within it. But the power exists; to be used only, as we think, for the safety of the lotah, and the good of our Khan and his subjects.'

'And, incidentally, for the preservation of less interesting people,' mused the Colonel, looking back to the dangers of the night. Then aloud: 'Ay, it is, as you say, a great mystery. I do not understand it, and no doubt I too shall disbelieve, when time has dulled the edge of my memory. Meantime'—he raised his hand to his forehead—'I salute the silver lotah, and I wish its future owner all honour and prosperity.'

It was a very jaded and weary man who climbed down from his horse, a big brown Waler, and staggered across the compound of Matthias's little bungalow and up the veranda steps, in search of bath and dinner. The Colonel could hardly have told how his return journey had gone. It

was a confused memory to him of lonely bridle-paths, and precipices that hid things not well to be seen, and naked, time-scarred mountains. It seemed to him as if he had been riding all his life, fleeing from a pre-existence of murders and ambushes and bewildering impossibilities.

He marched stiffly into the dining-room, gathering breath for a shout to his bearer. The little home looked dim and restful after his late field of action. Then he stopped, for an unfamiliar object occupied the table, and invited his attention by the signal of a scrap of letter-paper:

*'To the Colonel sahib. From the woman who does not forget.'*

It was a small open casket, and the sight of it made Matthias oblivious, for a second, to his tired limbs and his recent experiences. The box was crammed to overflowing with a hotch-potch of bangles, gold chains, and ear-rings, packed amongst a confusion of unset precious stones. It looked as if Mrs Black had ransacked her jewel-coffer, and huddled its contents pell-mell into the little box. The mass represented, as Matthias estimated at the first glance, a sum beyond the wildest dream of a thrifty half-pay Colonel.

He was still gaping at the spectacle when a spur clinked on the veranda. He swept the box into a drawer, and turned to face Carington.

'Why, where the dickens have you been?' asked the policeman in familiar English, mopping his forehead. 'There has been a fearful how-d'y-e-do at your next-door neighbour's—murder and sudden death, and I don't know all what. All the servants have disappeared, and I've got my hands full trying to size up the business. Alan Black has been stabbed, and his mother swears her other son, Nathoo, has done it; and so Nathoo is wanted; and then, just when I've arranged everything for following his flight, the old woman dies'—

'What!' said Matthias. 'Is Mrs Black dead too? Heavens, what an overwhelming flood of calamity has swept upon the family!'

'Hey? Oh yes, Mrs Black is dead. She dropped down in a fit this morning after volunteering a long story about Nathoo's jealousy of Alan, and its consequences—meaning the murder. The civil surgeon came round at once, but she never recovered consciousness. Perhaps it was just as well. She seemed quite wild and distraught at the shock of it all, poor soul! And so there we are. . . . Do you know anything about it, Matthias?'

Colonel Matthias took a step towards the table. He pulled open the drawer, and laid the casket upon it. Carington's jaw dropped.

'No, it's not a case of robbery with violence, my dear fellow.' Weary as he was, the Colonel could not help smiling at the policeman's stupefaction. 'Only—I *am* in a position to enlighten



you very distinctly upon the subject; and when I have told you—and I hope the details need not go to the public ear in their entirety—you will, perhaps, give me your opinion on a matter of conscience. . . . And yet, a gift is a gift.

Therefore, seeing that a very clear expression exists upon this paper, I think perhaps I may assume that I have a moral right at least to these jewels for the part that I have taken in the fortunes of The Silver Lotah.'

## THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

### THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION.



HE British Association for the Advancement of Science has held its meeting at Bradford this year. Since this valuable association met for the first time in 1831, the world has seen many changes; and, owing

to the multiplication of societies, the publication of technical journals, and the attention paid to scientific matters in our schools and colleges, the annual meetings of the British Association do not assume that importance which they once had. Still, we look to this meeting as a finger-post on the road to knowledge, which records the progress which has been made during the past year; and the papers read always include much that is worthy of careful perusal. The Presidential Address, which dealt with the 'cell' as the ultimate particle of all animal and vegetable tissues, was full of interest; but perhaps the subject which will most attract public attention just now is that of wireless telegraphy, which was so ably treated by Sir William Preece. Not only did this expert electrician foreshadow brilliant possibilities for wireless telegraphy, but he detailed experiments showing that actual speech by means of the telephone was possible from point to point without the aid of communicating wires.

### THE WAR BETWEEN MAN AND BEAST.

From India there comes once more the official figures relating to the 'casualties' caused in the constant war which prevails there between man and beast. We are happily situated in this country in being able to look back upon such a struggle as a thing of the past; but in our Eastern dependency destructive animals still claim their annual tribute of human blood. In the past year more than 128,000 animals were killed, and rewards claimed for their slaughter; and during the same period 25,166 men, women, and children met their death through tooth, claw, and the poison of snakes. To this terrible tale of human suffering must be added nearly 100,000 domestic animals which were killed by the same agencies. We thus see that the loss of life is about equal on both sides. It is interesting to see how the deaths are apportioned among the wild beasts. First comes the terrible man-eating tiger, which is responsible for 927 victims; the wolves come next with a total of 462; while the leopard claims

394. Under the heading 'other wild beasts' are computed 1482 human deaths. The rest of the grand total, no fewer than 21,900 items of this terrible death-list, are set down to snake-bite. It is almost futile to expect any great reduction in the annual loss of life from poisonous snakes, for the natives will never kill one of these creatures if they can avoid doing so.

### A MARVELLOUS VOYAGE.

'I do not hesitate to call it the most extraordinary book—in its way—ever published, and the adventure itself by far the most courageous, sustained, and successful enterprise of the kind ever undertaken by mortal man.' Thus writes Sir Edwin Arnold of Captain Slocum's recent book entitled *Sailing Alone around the World*, recounting how, in a boat of his own building, he sailed alone boldly out into the broad Atlantic upon a voyage of forty-six thousand miles. The voyage lasted three years and two months; and when the voyager returned to Boston, from whence he sailed, he had gained a pound in weight, and felt ten years younger than he did when he started from home three years before. His adventures were various, and he met sometimes with awfully stormy seas; but he was an accomplished sailor, and weathered all difficulties. The story is a wonderful record of human pluck, endurance, and perseverance, and should find millions of readers. The book is published by Messrs Sampson, Low, Marston, & Co.

### THE PROTECTION OF INSECTIVOROUS BIRDS.

The Society for the Protection of Birds, 3 Hanover Square, London, is doing useful work in calling attention to the need of fresh legislation to deal with the protection of insect-eating birds in India. Sir Charles Lawson some months ago contributed an article to the *Madras Mail*, in which he showed how much injury is caused in that country by the wholesale destruction of birds for the sake of their plumage. A preventive law is already in force in India, but it is much too limited in its scope, and is in many districts evaded. We learn from the article referred to that 'it is not only grain, such as rice, wheat, millet, &c., that is devoured in enormous quantities by insects, but that huge crops of other commercial products, such as cotton, oil-seeds, and the like, are compelled to pay heavy toll to those pests.' Upon good authority it is stated that in parts of India one-fourth of the cotton crop is sometimes lost

from the ravages of one kind of insect. This terrible loss is in great measure due to the shooting and netting of the birds, so that the skins may be imported to meet the vagaries of fashion in so-called civilised countries.

#### AN INCANDESCENT OIL-LIGHT.

The Kitson system of using an incandescent mantle in conjunction with vaporised mineral oil, although not familiar in this country, is much used in America; and, from the lamps which we have recently seen in action in London, we are led to think well of it, more especially for situations in which a high-power illuminant is required. The apparatus is small and is self-contained. It consists of a steel cylinder which is charged with compressed air by the action of a hand-pump. This cylinder contains a supply of petroleum, which, under pressure of the air, is carried to the lamp by copper tubing no thicker than a telegraph wire. The lamp is fitted with the now familiar Welsbach mantle, and the oil, vaporised at this point by the initial application of a flame, brings it to a glowing white-heat. The lamps are said to be of nearly 1000 candle-power, and to consume only half-a-pint of oil per hour. We understand that the Trinity House authorities have the system under consideration for use in lighthouses and lightships, an employment for which it seems eminently fitted. The system is also adapted for street-lighting, for open spaces, and for photographic purposes.

#### ARCTIC EXPLORATION.

This is an age of record-beating. A man no sooner executes a feat which no one else has achieved than some one else springs up and robs him of his laurels. Only the other day every one was talking about the wonderful expedition of Nansen, who succeeded in reaching a higher latitude in his good ship *The Fram* than any previous voyager had attained. He has now been distanced, by some nineteen nautical miles, by the Duke of Abruzzi, the nephew of the lately assassinated King Humbert of Italy. The Duke's expedition started in June last year, and the ship which carried it, the *Stella Polare*, was in the polar ice for eleven long months. The usual hardships were endured, the men having to kill their dogs for food. At one time the ship was pushed by the ice on to land, and through the leak made the hold was filled with water. It is reported that valuable scientific observations were made, and that forty bears and a walrus fell to the guns of the party.

#### SUBMARINE WARFARE.

The very old idea of a warship which can operate below the surface of the sea, and can deal death and destruction to craft of the more usual kind, has at last become a practical reality. America and France have both, after careful

trials, accepted this kind of warship as an addition to their navies; and Britain, perforce, must follow suit. We, as a nation, are slow to assimilate novelties, and more especially is this the case where Government departments are the arbiters. Sometimes we naturally suffer from thus lagging behind; but on the whole we score, for we have the advantage of profiting by the experience of others. We now learn that a newly-designed submarine boat is under trial by the British Admiralty, and that so far the experiments made have been most satisfactory. According to the *Daily Telegraph*, this boat can be steered beneath the heaviest man-of-war, and can attach a submarine mine to an enemy's ship and get clear away before the explosion occurs. The new boat is fitted with tubes for discharging torpedoes, and is armed with quick-firing and machine guns. It will float on the surface or beneath it as may be required, and is in every respect as efficient as its French and American rivals. The low cost of one of these terrible engines of naval warfare, as compared with a battle-ship, is not the least of its recommendations.

#### THE STEEL AGE.

One of the most important factors in the advance of the mechanical arts which has distinguished the close of the nineteenth century is the employment of steel in place of other constructive materials. Steel can now be made of many kinds; and it is owing to this command over the nature of the metal to be compounded that so many new applications can be found for it. Even railway-cars and boats are now made of thin steel moulded into shape by hydraulic pressure. In small things also we find that steel is usurping the place of both iron and wood. Since it was found out that by an annealing process steel could be made malleable, hundreds of small fittings have been made of the metal. As a case in point we may take the domestic umbrella, the evolution of which from the clumsy 'gamp' of our forefathers would form an interesting chapter. In its most recent form the frame is made entirely of steel; and Messrs Samuel Fox & Co. not only make the frame of a special kind of steel which will bend and not break, but the stick itself is made of a metal tube which will neither bend nor break. This form of construction conduces both to strength and long life, while, at the same time, it has a compact and neat appearance.

#### VOTING BY MACHINERY.

The occurrence of a General Election attracts attention to an invention patented by Mr W. H. Howe, which is now exhibited in London. This is a machine which its contriver claims to fulfil all, and more than all, the provisions and intentions of the Ballot Act, in enabling a voter to record his vote without any chance of blunder

and in absolute secrecy. Each voter passes through a turnstile and finds himself in a small chamber, where facing him is a row of handles above each of which is the name of a candidate. He pulls the handle of the man he wishes to vote for, an action which at once locks all the other handles; and as he passes out of another turnstile, the handle he has moved returns to its place, and his vote is printed upon a travelling roll of paper. The votes are printed in consecutive numbers, so that the last one recorded for each candidate gives the total of his poll, and thus no counting is necessary. The need of such a machine is evidenced by the fact that in every General Election in this country, by one blunder or another, about twenty thousand votes are rendered invalid. It is well known, too, that mistakes owing to faulty counting are by no means uncommon.

#### ART IN THE THEATRES.

It used to be a common idea that scene-painting is synonymous with daubing. This, of course, is all nonsense, for scene-painting as we know it now in the best theatres is a fine art requiring much study before proficiency is attained. Among those who served an apprenticeship at this kind of work may be mentioned Stanfield and David Roberts, who afterwards rose to great eminence as landscape painters. A gentleman who seems to be following in their footsteps is Mr A. J. Black, who has been commissioned to provide act-drops for several of the handsome suburban theatres which have sprung up round London. These, we learn from the *Magazine of Art*, in which the designs for these act-drops are reproduced, are not painted in distemper, after the manner of theatrical scenery generally; they are in oil-colours, a medium which ensures a long life. Some of these paintings, which will well bear examination with a powerful opera-glass, measure as much as thirty feet across; but they naturally vary in size with the dimensions of the proscenium which each is designed to fill.

#### IN MEMORIAM.

The house where a famous man has lived is always an object of interest, and it has long been the custom in London and various provincial towns to embellish such a building with a modest tablet setting forth the name of the revered one, and the date when he occupied the premises. In this way the houses occupied by Dickens, Thackeray, Keats, Dryden, Pope, and many other writers are placarded for the benefit of passers-by. The tablet in general consists of a medallion without any pretension to artistic excellence; but an exception has lately been made in the case of the house once occupied by England's great landscape artist, Turner, which stands in Cheyne Row, Chelsea. The tablet in this instance has been designed in metal by Mr Walter Crane, and the

work has been carried out with his usual decorative skill. It bears the presentment of a painter's palette and brushes, together with the following inscription: 'Joseph Mallard William Turner, landscape painter, lived and worked in this house. B. 1775. D. 1851.'

#### ACTION OF AIR ON PLANTS.

A German investigator has made a series of experiments in order to ascertain the action of dry and moist air on plants, and he has published the results of his researches. He finds that germinating plants develop with greater rapidity in air saturated with moisture than they will in dry air or in air in its normal condition, but that the stem is longer and has a smaller diameter, while the number of leaves shows an increase, seemingly at the expense of the rootlets, which are greatly diminished. When plants are exposed to dry air, on the other hand, the development of the stem and leaves is diminished and the stems increase in girth. Under these latter conditions the foliage surface decreases and the number of rootlets are augmented.

#### IDENTIFICATION OF CRIMINALS.

The Bertillon system of criminal investigation has had a signal triumph in the case of Salson, the would-be assassin of the Shah, whose identity was at once established by its aid. Briefly put, this method of investigation depends upon recording certain measurements of the head and body, together with the colour of the hair and eyes, and imprints of the finger-tips. The system has in a modified way been adopted in this country, and a committee appointed by the Home Secretary is now considering how far it may be further extended. In France, where a man is presumed to be guilty immediately the police lay their hands upon him, the physical examination is conducted without demur; but in Britain, where we hold a man to be innocent until his guilt be proved, no such preliminary step is allowable. Our own method is fairer to the suspected individual, while that in vogue in France is certainly more conducive to the public safety.

#### THE BOILING-POINT OF WATER.

Most persons are apt to regard the boiling-point of the domestic saucepan as a fixed quantity, unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians; but the cooks of a certain town in New Mexico have discovered that, in consequence of its great altitude above the sea, water boils there at 202 degrees Fahrenheit instead of the normal 212 degrees Fahrenheit. This means that all the cooking calculations depending upon the heat of water have to be revised. Everything, from a breakfast-egg to a silver side of beef, takes longer to cook than it does lower down in the atmosphere. Another thing which militates against the calculations of the ordinary cook of this same town



is, that the air is so dry that vegetables are deprived of half their natural moisture, and must be left a long time in water to recover themselves before being cooked. In connection with this matter of the boiling-point, we might observe that if our cooks at home could only realise the fact that it is impossible to raise an open vessel containing water above boiling-point, they would save much of the gas used in so many houses for fuel.

#### LIGHTNING-STROKE.

Professor Henry, of the United States Weather Bureau, has issued a very interesting report upon the subject of thunderstorms and accidents from lightning, although his words refer only to occurrences in America. Misadventure from lightning is increasing rather than diminishing, the year 1899 affording more examples than any previous period. In the twelve months five hundred and sixty-two persons were either killed outright or afterwards died in consequence of injuries brought about by lightning, and no fewer than eight hundred and twenty received injuries more or less severe, from which they ultimately recovered. In detail, some of the cases present curious features. Sometimes the clothing of the persons struck was set on fire and their bodies badly burned, but they recovered. Some of the fatal cases exhibited no sign of hurt, while in others the skin was much discoloured. A number of precautions are recommended to those who would avoid death or injury from lightning. About 11 per cent. of all the deaths recorded were due to taking shelter beneath trees during a storm. Several fatalities also occurred in connection with metal wires used instead of cords for hanging clothes to dry. In some of the American states a great increase is shown in the number of fatalities from lightning, whilst others show a decrease. There seems to be no accounting for this; it is one of the vagaries of lightning.

#### SEA FISHERIES LEGISLATION.

The committee to which the recent Sea Fisheries Bill was referred have made a special report to the House of Commons recommending further inquiry and investigation before proceeding with the measure. While admitting that there is a serious diminution of the fish-supply, they point out that it would be next to impossible to prohibit the taking of immature fish without stopping trawling altogether; but as it is an established fact that young and undersized fish frequent well-known areas in the North Sea, prevention of fishing in such areas would do much good. Such action, however, could not be secured except by international agreement and under effectual policing. The committee are in favour of international treatment of the subject generally, and especially with regard to the North Sea area already referred to. They also

recommend the adequate equipment of and enlarged powers to the Government department in charge of the matter, so as to promote careful investigation, and to ascertain what has been done in other countries in the matter of scientific research or practical legislation.

#### THE WANING LIGHT.

THE flowers fade out on moor and woodland,  
And stormier waves caress the beach;  
The winds are louder in the forests,  
And wailing grasses low beseech:  
How tender are the later blossoms!  
In red and pink they shine, and stand,  
A gentle memory of the beauties  
That lured us in the summer land!

The martens on the posts are sitting;  
They twitter soft their pensive lay;  
An instinct guides their every motion,  
And soon they wing their devious way.  
How, to my heart, the scenes of colour,  
The pictured glow on leaf and flower,  
Speak of our frail and changing nature,  
And of life's fitful fever'd hour!

But as, with gentleness alluring,  
Each blossom fades, each leaf is shed,  
May I, too, uncomplaining, hasten  
To life's swift goal, in mercy led!  
The Wise Design that guides the blossom,  
The loving thought that tones the tree,  
Be spirit-lessons to my spirit,  
Be consolation, friend, to thee!

WILLIAM JOSEPH GALLAGHER.

READY DECEMBER 1, 1900.

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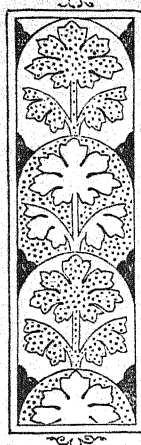
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The December Part completes the Volume of *Chambers's Journal* for 1900.

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- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2nd. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3rd. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
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# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### STEPHEN WHITLEGE'S REVENGE.

By GUY BOOTHBY.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.



FRESH breeze was blowing along as pretty a Wiltshire valley as was to be found in the length and breadth of that usually open county. It was picturesque at any time; on this particular afternoon,

however, its beauty was accentuated by the charming lights and shadows that prevailed. The hills on either side consisted of long sloping Downs, covered with velvet turf, with chalk-seams in places, and dotted at intervals with small copses, now just tinted with the first green leaves of spring. Through the luscious meadows of the valleys below ran a stream that could be traced from the mill in the village on the one hand as far as the park-wall of my Lord Carlsbridge's demesne on the other. Between these points were several bridges: two were of stone, and consequently of importance; one was of iron, an innovation, and for the same reason distrusted; and two others, one of which should not have been called a bridge at all, since it was only the remains of one. The latter bore the name of the Monks' Crossing, and the legend ran that it had been built by the inhabitants of the monastery, the only remaining portion of the monastic building now forming part of the mill before referred to. At the foot of the Downs on the south side, and some fifty feet above the river, ran the turnpike road, marvellous for dust in the summer, but on a winter's day a joy to the heart of the pedestrian. Follow this road along from the ruins of the old Roman encampment, and when you reach the corner, just before you descend to the village, you will discover a strongly-made seat, considerably placed by a benefactor on the wayside. Its back is secured to a large oak; its supports are driven firmly into the ground; and, as you will observe when you examine it, it is carved from end to end with the names and initials of the folk who have rested on it. It

has played a most important part in the history of the village has that old seat. Without a doubt, more than half of the marriages that have taken place in the little gray stone church, whose spire can just be seen peeping above the trees of the Vicarage garden, can be traced to its agency. Indeed, by some strange coincidence, it is quite certain that the three people with whom the story I have to tell is most concerned would never have seen the light of day at all had it not been for its gentle influence.

When the Hon. William George Horatio Benfield, afterwards my Lord Carlsbridge, to whose property I have already made passing allusion, was a young man, he had the happiness to fall head over ears in love with the Lady Judith Hackquith, the beautiful daughter and heiress of the third Earl of Senningdale. She was staying at the Castle at the time; and on one memorable occasion the young couple managed to give their companions the slip, and eventually found themselves sitting side by side on this same old seat. What was more in accordance with the fitness of things than that he, who had been plucking up courage for weeks past, should propose? She accepted him, and three months later they were married, and in due course Victor George Horatio Benfield, future Viscount Carlsbridge, made his appearance upon the stage of life.

Let us now descend one step lower on the social ladder.

When the Reverend George Garret, then a meek young curate, made the acquaintance of Cecilia, daughter of Doctor Benjamin Brown, the village practitioner, he, like the young Honourable above mentioned, fell in love at first sight. She taught in the Sunday-school; and when they had known each other for some three months, she casually allowed him to become aware of the fact that on Thursday afternoons it was her custom to walk down the valley to her grandmother's

house at Tollingford, returning before dusk along the highway. Whatever may be said by cynics to the contrary, curates are, after all, only human beings; accordingly, the very next Thursday afternoon found the reverend gentleman watching the high-road into the valley from the point of vantage of the Lovers' Seat. Three Thursdays later, at the same spot, the mutual and inevitable confessions were made. In due course the old vicar died, George received the living, and they were married. A year later the second—or, I should say, perhaps, the most important—person of our little drama made her appearance, and was declared by her parents to be the most beautiful child as yet permitted to pay a visit to our planet. She was christened Mildred Cecilia, and great things were prophesied for her future. There still remains, however, one other person to be accounted for.

Far away, beyond the sky-line, tucked into a convenient hollow of the Downs, is a village, smaller than that which we have hitherto been describing, but in its own estimation as important as any to be found in England. Among the inhabitants might be numbered a certain farmer, Stephen Whitledge by name. He was a stern, hard, curiously-tempered man, who had gone through life, if one may use his own favourite expression, 'remembering how many beans make five, and taking very good care that he was not cheated out of one of them.' Among his many sons—there were twelve of them—the eldest was in every way the most remarkable. He resembled his father in everything; or, to be more particular, it might be said that he excelled him. Where Whitledge senior was hard, his son was iron; where his father was domineering, the other was doubly so; where the elder was satisfied with his exact due, the other wanted more, and usually managed to get it, to the discomfiture of those with whom he came in contact. But I am wandering from the matter of the Lovers' Seat.

One Sunday afternoon, late in summer, the younger Stephen made up his mind, crossed the Downs, and laid siege to the heart of pretty Hetty Burman, only child of Miller Burman, a decent tradesman and a well-respected man. When he returned home, later in the evening, it was to announce the fact that he intended marrying her. It is certain that, far from objecting, his own family heaved a sigh of relief. That Hetty herself might have something to say in the matter did not occur to him for a moment. That she could be foolish enough to care for any one but himself he would have regarded as out of the question. Moreover, it would have mattered but little: he would have married her all the same. As a matter of fact the poor child *was* in love, and with a young farmer farther along the valley towards the old market-town of Salisbury. He was of a directly opposite nature to Stephen. He was weak where Stephen was strong; hesi-

tating where Stephen came straight to the point and stuck there. The end might easily have been foreseen. One winter's afternoon Hetty and her lover met at the old seat. Both felt that great heroism was about to be demanded of them, and with equal certainty both doubted their power to meet the obligation. Overhead the sky was dull and gray, the pewits uttered their mournful cry, and the autumn wind moaned dismally along the valley. The two lovers had just promised for the third time that only death should part them, when there was the sound of a horse's step on the road below. A moment later Stephen Whitledge, mounted upon an animal that was his own counterpart for endurance and determination, put in an appearance. A stormy scene ensued, with the result that the weaker man was sent about his business forthwith, vowing vengeance, but incapable of executing it; whilst Stephen, who had dismounted, bade the trembling girl be seated and listen to him. He thereupon informed her that she was to be his wife, that he had arranged everything with her father, and that the sooner the ceremony took place the better for all parties concerned. Needless to say, a month later it *did* take place, and a more miserable wedding, so folk declared, had never been solemnised in the little church. Twelve months passed, and found the miller ousted from his mill, Stephen in possession, and Hetty in her grave. It also found an enormous boy, Stephen by name, and the exact image of his father, if the gossips were to be believed, ensconced in a cradle in the kitchen at the mill-house. It is with that baby we have to deal; and with this remark I may say that I have introduced you to the three principal characters of our drama: Mildred Garret, the vicar's daughter; the Honourable Victor George Horatio Benfield, future Lord Carlsbridge; and Stephen Whitledge the younger, who, by the way, promises at an early age to be as hard and tyrannical as his father. The world being a great square of mosaic, of which the lives of men and women make up the pattern, let us try what sort of effect we can produce with the materials before us.

As I observed at the commencement of my story, it was a glorious afternoon in early spring—an afternoon that filled one with the pure joy of living. Overhead the sky was blue, with here and there a fleeting cloud that hurled swift shadows across the Downs and threw ever-changing lights into the valley below. Now and again the breeze, first cousin perhaps to that which had blown on the night of poor Hetty's discomfiture, would sweep down the valley, ruffling the surface of the river and causing the heads of the poplars to bend before it as if in homage to His Majesty. But it is not with the breeze, the trees, or the clouds that I have to deal.

On the top of the Downs, sacred for the greater part of the week to the mole, the pewit, and the hare, is, or was, if those vandals of the Archæo-



logical Society have not disturbed it, a large tumulus or barrow, called by the villagers, for some legendary reason, 'The King's Grave.' In plainer words, it was a large mound of earth, certainly of man's handiwork, and, like the remainder of the Downs, it was covered with velvety turf. Seated on the mound, barrow, or tumulus were three young people, a girl and two boys. They were all of an age; but the most casual observer would have noticed that there was a distinct difference in caste. If only as a matter of gallantry, we will commence with a description of the lady. At that moment she could not have been more than thirteen years of age. She was the possessor of a delicate face, which, to a critical eye, showed signs of future beauty. She had raced the boys up the side of the Down, and her hair—which, by the way, was soft and wavy—in consequence hung in the wildest confusion upon her shoulders. Though her dress was simple and unaffected, she wore it with an air that implied that when the proper time should arrive she would be found to appreciate fine feathers as much as the remainder of her sex. Her name was Mildred Garret, and her home, the Vicarage, could just be seen peeping out from among the elms on the opposite bank of the river. It was in the two boys, however, that the difference of caste before mentioned was most marked. Each was typical of his class. The elder was a finely-proportioned youth, with clear-cut features and eyes of a steely gray. His hands and feet were small and well shaped, while the texture of his linen, the cut of his Eton jacket, the very straw of his hat, not to mention the ribbon, spoke for his position in the world. Apart from these externals, however, he was a pleasant lad, of kindly and generous instincts, a little imperious perhaps, which, after all, was not to be wondered at, seeing that his mother, fond woman, never permitted him, however much he might desire to do so, to forget for an instant that he was the Honourable Victor George Horatio Benfield, and would in due course be Viscount Carlsbridge. For the present the matter did not trouble him in the least; there were boys at Eton of rank far superior to his own, who took very good care that he did not give himself airs.

The second youth was, if anything, scarcely so tall as his companion, but he was of stouter build, and looked what he was, the descendant of a race of sturdy yeomen, such as have made our island respected in all countries of the world. Regarding him closely, and remembering whence he sprang, 'twas easy to see that the dogged fixity of purpose that had been the adherent property of the Whitledges for generations out of mind was not lost in him. The face of the grandfather, and of the father, was also the face of the boy; and it did not need the gift of prophecy to predict that when the time came this youth would prove as overbearing and as

hard to deal with as his sire and grandsire had been before him.

'What a nuisance it is having to go back to-morrow!' Benfield was saying as he sat on the edge of the barrow, looking down into the valley below. 'There are all sorts of things I want to do at the last moment; and one never seems to have been at home a week before it's time to go back again.'

The girl made as if she would speak, but her lips trembled, and she stopped in time. She was as sorry as he that the holidays were at an end, but not for quite the same reason.

'Myself, I don't see why they are all so set on schoolin',' put in Stephen, digging his pocket-knife spitefully into the turf as if it were the body of a schoolmaster he had before him. 'We could get on just as well without it; at least I know I could. Father played truant most of his time, and he's made his way in the world.'

Victor said nothing in reply to this speech.

'If it were possible, I should like to learn everything there is to be taught,' said Mildred slowly, pulling her hat down to keep the sun out of her eyes. 'It must be lovely to be very clever.'

'I should like it too,' said Victor. 'But it's the bother of learning that I grumble at.'

Stephen's face darkened. He felt instinctively that he was in the minority, and, as usual, the thought did not please him.

'At any rate, if I beant as clever as some folks,' he retorted, dropping unconsciously into dialect, 'I reckon to know 'ow many beans make five. You mark my words; I shall die rich.'

The girl felt that there was something sordid in this boast; and, though she did not quite know why, she looked apologetically at Benfield. There was a slight sneer upon the boy's handsome face, the sneer of a man who does not consider the possession of money to be the beginning and the end of happiness.

'I'd rather be a soldier,' he said. 'That's better than anything in the world. Fancy winning the Victoria Cross! Old General Hidsley, who was staying with us at Christmas, got his V.C. in the Mutiny; and somebody told me that it was his proudest possession.'

'I'd rather have the money,' replied the miller's son, who had inherited all his father's appreciation of the main chance. 'Honour and glory is all very well for such as want it, but give me plenty of money. Father says that's what makes the mare to go.'

'But if you were a soldier, you'd be serving the Queen,' put in the girl, whose quick perception had shown her that relations between the two youths were somewhat strained. They had been on the verge of quarrelling all the afternoon; and while, like a true woman, her sense of power had been flattered, knowing that she was more or less directly the reason of their antagonism, she did not want them to come to open strife.

'I should be proud to serve the Queen if I were a man,' she continued.

Whitledge was silent for a moment. He knew what he wanted to say, and he knew exactly how to say it; but for once, in his short life, Prudence laid her hand upon him and restrained him. The temptation to be nasty, however, proved too great to be resisted, and the words slipped out almost before he was aware of the fact.

'What do I care about the Queen?' he asked. 'She's nought to me. She only grinds poor folk down for taxes, and'—

In a flash Victor remembered what his father had said to him. 'Recollect, my boy,' the latter had declared, 'that the man who stands by and hears his Sovereign insulted without making himself her champion is unworthy of the name of Englishman.' Victor accordingly sprang to his feet before the other's speech was finished. 'You're a blackguard,' he cried, his eyes flashing fire; 'you're a cad to say such a thing.'

Stephen was also on his feet by this time. The wild Whitledge blood was afire, and he was determined to stand by what he had said, let the cost be what it might. Mildred had risen also, and, seeing the likelihood of their coming to blows, prepared to act the part of peacemaker.

'Take back what you have said,' cried Victor, endeavouring as he spoke to put the girl on one side.

'I won't,' replied Stephen; then, as if to cut off all possibility of retreat, he added, 'I say it again; the Queen's nought to me.'

The blow that followed took him on the lower lip, and a moment later a trickle of blood ran down his chin. After that arbitration was useless, so the girl retired to the top of the barrow and watched, amid her tears, the progress of the combat. The boys had known each other from childhood, and in consequence had fought on innumerable occasions before, but never as they were doing on this occasion. The difference in their styles would have afforded a suggestive study to an intelligent onlooker. Victor fought calmly and coolly, but with the same dogged determination to win that had characterised his ancestors

on Naseby and many other fields of battle. Stephen, on the other hand, fought wildly and desperately, full of blind rage, careless of everything save a desire to make his mark. Ten minutes later, however, the combat was at an end and he was making his way down the hillside, endeavouring to staunch a bleeding nose. He had been badly beaten, and was withdrawing from the field vowing vengeance against his late opponent. By the time he had reached the high-road the couple he had left at the top of the Downs were also descending. Eventually they called a halt at the old seat of which so much has been said. There was a new light in the girl's eyes as she looked at the lad beside her.

'Whatever will your mother say when she sees you?' she asked as Victor fingered what promised to be an excellent black eye.

'Nothing,' Victor answered stolidly. Then, as if he were not quite certain, he added, 'Is it so very bad?'

'Awful,' the girl replied; then, to comfort him, she added, 'but Stephen's is worse. It was horrible to see you fighting like that.'

'Pooh! what's a fight?' said the gallant youth. 'I have one almost every term. You've got to, you know, or knuckle under.'

His words recalled the fact that it was their last afternoon together. Leaning a little nearer her, he whispered something in her ear. She gave a little start and then blushed rosy red. This was new, but for some reason it was not altogether unexpected. At any rate it was delightful. Slowly his arm moved along the back of the seat and passed round her neck, his face, meanwhile, flushing as crimson as the sunset overhead. At that moment Stephen, who was half-way down the hill, turned and looked back. What he saw was sufficient to drive all thought of his defeat out of his head. He forgot his bleeding nose, his swollen eye, his cut lip, and from that moment hated his rival with a new and even more deadly hatred than before.

Little did either of the trio guess how important that incident was destined to prove in their after-lives.

## 'FINE FEATHERS.'

By W. C. MACKENZIE.



THE City warehouses of the London and India Docks Committee furnish material alike for philosophical and commercial profit. From the busy thoroughfare of Bishopsgate Street, you turn into one of those quiet streets of which there are so many examples in London: bustle and excitement in close juxtaposition with peace and restfulness. To be quite precise, the warehouses are situated in Cutler

Street, in the neighbourhood of Houndsditch, a combination which suggests Sheffield and Jerusalem rather than ornithology and millinery. Nevertheless, these tall buildings are of special interest equally to the student of natural history and the lady who shops in Bond Street, incongruous as their respective tastes may appear. Even the archæologist might spend an hour in these warehouses with pleasure and profit, for there he will find a very small but supremely interesting

museum of prehistoric remains, comprising the skull of a mammoth; cracked (literally) human skulls, in one of which is sticking the iron implement which caused its owner's death; and ancient coins and other relics of the misty past.

The subject-matter of this article, however, does not relate to the past, with its saurians and savages, its fashions and scanty clothing and scantier manners; it is intended to deal with the peaceful, palpitating present, with its fashions in fanciful frocks and fine feathers.

Every alternate month a sale of birds' skins and of various kinds of feathers is held in the dock emporium. The birds are slaughtered for the sake of their gaudy plumages: the brilliant parakeet, the glittering humming-bird, the more sober-hued osprey, and the lordly bird of paradise, with its delicately beautiful tail—all these go to feed the rapacious maw of fashion. Osprey feathers, it should be noted, are not the feathers of the osprey or fish-hawk, but the crest plumes of an egret, a kind of heron (see *Chambers's Journal* for January 1896). The birds are wrapped like so much bacon and packed securely in cases for shipment. They come to London in thousands. The distances which divide the forests of India and the jungles of New Guinea from the Common of Clapham and the Heath of Hampstead are bridged by these bright-headed visitors, which, though dead, yet speak of unappeased and unappeasable feminine vanity.

Bundles upon bundles of peacock feathers are here, which in course of time reappear as adornments on screens and elsewhere; and it is whispered that, by a process of scraping and other means of preparation which are only known to the initiated, many of these feathers will be so transformed as to do duty for the more expensive and more highly-prized osprey feathers. To the mere man these accurate imitations appear just as effective as real ospreys; but to the feminine mind this is probably as inconclusive an argument for their use as it would be to say that a painted sparrow looks just as well as a canary. Imitations are not an unmixed evil if they serve to preserve from destruction a beautiful bird which is said to be fast becoming alarmingly scarce owing to the predatory instincts of commerce, stimulated by the demands of fashion.

The bird, however, whose feathers are at these periodical sales of paramount importance is the ostrich. The ostrich is not generally credited with an oversupply of brains; not to put too fine a point upon it, stupidity is a characteristic which, rightly or wrongly, it has earned for itself. The most familiar example of this quality is its playful way of digging its head in the sand when pursued, thus mistaking effect for cause. The quality of its brains, however, was not despised by the ancients, whose gourmets appreciated them as an article of luxurious diet. Greek and Roman history contains various references to

the ostrich; and it is on record that Heliogabalus had a dish served up which was composed of the brains of six hundred of these birds, a circumstance which certainly seems to support the common theory that the ostrich is not overburdened with brains. The dish just described is one for which a modern millionaire, however great an epicure, has no special craving: ostrich brains are luckily at a discount in the provision market of the nineteenth century.

In course of time the wings—which, by the way, might be more correctly designated 'land-sails'—and the tail of the bird became more interesting than its brains, on account of their beautifully soft and graceful feathers. In the brave days of chivalry it was a common practice for knights to wear these plumes in their helmets. Even at the present day, the battle of Crécy is commemorated by the three ostrich feathers which form the crest of the Prince of Wales. It will be remembered that this was the crest of the blind king of Bohemia, who was slain upon that memorable field, and that the heroic Black Prince adopted it, with its motto, *Ich Dien* ('I serve'), and transmitted it to all successive heirs-apparent of the English throne. The dashing Cavaliers in the Civil War adorned their hats with ostrich feathers, their dandified appearance forming a striking contrast to the sober attire of the grim Roundheads. At the Restoration the fashion was reintroduced.

Gradually, however, the use of ostrich feathers as articles of male attire fell into desuetude, and at the present day the feminine portion of the community has a monopoly of the custom; and yet not quite a monopoly, as a visit to the Earl's Court Exhibition of last year amply showed. The dusky warriors of 'Savage South Africa' delighted in adorning themselves with an imposing headgear consisting of feathers which once graced the bodies of the fleet-footed birds of the South African desert. Thus, savage man and civilised woman meet on a common platform in their devotion to fine feathers. Civilised man has progressed beyond that stage of development; but even the emancipated woman is not invariably proof against the seductive influences of feathery adornment, which she shares with the Zulu and the Choctaw. Here, however, we are treading on delicate ground, which we hasten to leave.

The establishment of farms for breeding ostriches appears to have been first tried as an experiment by the French Society of Acclimatisation in Algeria. Subsequently the practice extended to South Africa, which is now *par excellence* the home of ostrich-farming. Between forty and fifty years ago there was at least one flock of domesticated ostriches in Cape Colony; but it was not until the present quarter of the century that ostrich-breeding became an important factor in South African industries.

To what important dimensions the trade in



ostrich feathers has now attained may be gauged by an inspection of the showrooms in the Dock warehouses during the week previous to a sale. Two floors covering a large superficial area are reserved for these feathers alone. They are divided into lots, each lot occupying a separate compartment. As many as three thousand or more of these lots are disposed of at one sale, when they frequently realise as much as £150,000. The feathers are sorted according to the type or quality, and laid out in these compartments for the inspection of buyers, each lot being numbered in the sale catalogue. It is an education to watch an expert valuer at his work. Accompanied by his clerk, he handles the feathers with a rapidity born of long practice, and in less than a minute has made his valuation, which he instructs his amanuensis to note against each lot, with a comment on the quality which is eloquent in its brevity and comprehensiveness. Then he passes on to the next lot, and the process is repeated until all the compartments have been inspected and valued. These valuations guide his operations at the forthcoming sale. When it is realised that in one compartment the feathers may be worth only 10s. per pound, and those in the adjoining compartment as much as £10 or £15 per pound, or more, it is not difficult to see that in this trade, if in any, a man must know his business thoroughly. The fluctuations in the prices of ostrich feathers are very great. At one sale a certain class of feathers will sell at a certain rate per pound; two months later, at the following sale, the same quality may realise 30 or 40 per cent. more or less per pound. Like every other commodity, the values of ostrich feathers are regulated by the laws of supply and demand; but there are few other articles of commerce which are so subject to the caprices of fashion. At the present day, when ostrich plumes, ostrich-feather boas, and ostrich-feather fans are in so much request by the fair members of the community, prices are decidedly high; but if a revulsion of taste were to take place for no more cogent reason than the example of the few who set the fashion in those matters, a sudden and violent change would take place in the commercial value of the feathers. It is therefore incumbent upon the dealer to watch the trend of the fashions as well as of the feather market, and to regulate his operations accordingly. Having such an uncertain factor to deal with as feminine taste in personal adornment, it behoves him to be wary lest he fall a victim to misplaced confidence in the permanency of a fashionable craze.

The ostrich attains maturity in three years, and during that period great care must be exercised by him who hopes to be a successful farmer. The feathers are plucked every six or eight months, each bird yielding some two dozen. These are sorted and arranged before shipment, and tied tightly with string into bundles, the

number of feathers in each varying according to their size. The manner of tying the bundles is so characteristic that by its means an experienced man can tell the particular district from which they come. Their tightness and uniformity are remarkable: if once unloosed, it would be impossible for an untrained hand to produce so workman-like a result. However diversified the tying may be, there is one feature which, with some honourable exceptions, is common to all the bundles: the inferior, scraggy feathers are hidden well out of sight in the centre!

Ostrich feathers are exported chiefly from South Africa, and in very much smaller quantities from the Barbary States and Egypt. They are packed in large cases, which are covered with canvas ('gunnies') and securely wired. They are sealed in such a manner as to suggest that they contain gold rather than articles of merchandise. As a matter of fact, they are considered of such value as to be treated in certain respects like the yellow metal. Freight is charged, as on specie, so much per cent. on their value, in some instances the rate is very high. The old catch, 'Which is heavier: a pound of gold or a pound of feathers?' does not, therefore, apply in this case, for freight calculations are not made on the basis of the *avoirdupois* table. The Soudanese evidently understand their business, for their bundles are tied with a superfluity of twine; and, with their instinct for colour, they add what appears to be a perfectly unnecessary wrapping of gaudy paper, heavy with gilt. The explanation of this is simple, for the string and the paper both add to the weight. 'Are they sufficiently civilised to put the faulty feathers in the middle?' the writer asked. In reply, he was shown the centre of a bundle where, neatly hidden from view, were several wizened feathers which no lady with proper self-respect would care to see in her fan. So it appears the wily children of the desert are just as wide awake as the London fruiterer who puts all the big strawberries on the top of his basket. As in strawberries so in feathers, the deception does not pay in the long-run, for this propensity of the Soudanese is so well known that the market value of their goods suffers materially.

The large plumes which one sees curling so gracefully round ladies' hats come from the wing and the tail of the bird. The white plumes require careful bleaching before they are fit for their ultimate place of honour, for they are sadly tinged with yellow, the result of contact with the sandy soil where the birds are reared. The plumes of the male ostrich are larger and finer than those of the female bird, thus exemplifying a law of nature which is universal in the feathered world; and the female feathers are further distinguished from those of the male bird by a dark shading at the back, which one must leave the naturalist to explain. The feathers of

the male are of two colours only—black and white; the feathers of the female are of various shades. Perhaps the naturalist can say whether the character of the two sexes agrees with the colour of their feathers! The male ostrich must be a good sort of fellow in family life, for he even takes his turn on the nest with the female bird during the hatching season. The bundles of short feathers plucked from the body of the ostrich, and technically named 'floss,' are used chiefly for boas and fans, as well as for hats. Boas also form a convenient outlet for defective plumes.

From the merchant and dealers the feathers pass into the hands of the manufacturers who prepare them for the wholesale and retail market. They finally reappear as fluffy boas encircling graceful—or otherwise—necks; cooling fans which, dexterously wielded, speak the language of flirtation; or nodding plumes in wonderful hat creations. It is a far cry from a South African ostrich-farm to a London or provincial ballroom. One wonders what the ostriches them-

selves would have to say to the transmigration were they sufficiently sapient to philosophise on the subject.

The annual value of ostrich feathers imported into London—which is the sole market for this country—has now reached a sum of about £1,000,000 sterling. Whatever, therefore, political economists or philosophers may have to say about the trade, there can be no doubt as to its dimensions. France and America are also important markets for these feathers. The dames of Paris and New York are, no less than their British sisters, under the spell of the graceful plume and the fluffy 'floss.' There is this much to be said in favour of ostrich-farming: it tends to perpetuate the existence of, in some respects, the most interesting of birds. Were it not for the demand for its feathers, the ostrich would, in course of time, share the fate of its cousins, the moa of New Zealand, already extinct, and the emu of Australia, the latter of which is gradually but surely becoming a *rara avis*.

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

By JOHN OXENHAM.

CHAPTER XXVII.—HOW GASTON CAME HOME.



TWO days later we sailed for Sydney. The Governor accompanied us in his launch as far as was compatible with his sense of personal comfort and safety, and then waved a final *bon voyage*, while his launch shrieked the same with its siren, and then chuffed energetically back up the bay. The population of Noumea, so far as they were at liberty to do so, turned out to show their sense of what was due to the man who had so patiently borne an unmerited imprisonment, and whom now the nation delighted to honour. The crew of the despatch-boat shouted their good wishes, and New Caledonia sank astern and became a memory, which for some of us the years might soften, but which for one at all events it would take more than a lifetime to efface.

We had on board one of the Governor's aides, Captain Lemarc, a pleasant, light-hearted fellow, in the highest of spirits at the prospect of a few days' release from the prison-house, and bursting with the importance of his mission, for he was going to electrify France with news of the capture of Lepard, and to bring back the Government's instructions concerning him. The despatch-boat was still undergoing repairs, and would bring him back on her next trip.

Captain Lemarc's light-heartedness and high spirits, however, barely sufficed to carry him through the day, and as evening drew on and the schooner began to roll to the swell, they

dwindled by degrees, and came at last to vanishing-point.

Dinner finished him completely. He rose precipitately after the first course, with a very white face, murmured through his clenched teeth, 'Excuse me, I have business on deck,' and retreated in fairly good order.

When we came up later on we found him, with one arm slipped through the shrouds, pensively watching the swell and seethe of the dark water below; and when I tendered him my sympathy he groaned, 'God made the dry land, but the devil made the sea;' and I helped him down to his cabin and got him comfortably on his back in his bunk, and left him to meditate on the possibilities of a French army crossing the silver streak to conquer Britain.

Gaston was not troubled by the sea. He had all a Breton's love for the water, and had been on friendly terms with it all his life.

It was a pleasure to us all, and to Denise a rapturous delight, to see the shadow draw from his face, and the light of life and hope begin to glow in it once more. He did not talk much at first, for the weight of it all was on him still; but he sat with us on deck in the glorious sunshine, and the nip of the salt wind brought the colour to his cheeks, and before we raised Mount Lindsay there was new light in his eyes, and by the time we rounded Port Jackson Light, on the fifth day, he was a new man entirely.

Then how Denise chattered during those five

days! Her merry tongue was busy with the past—but not the near past: that was to be buried and forgotten as quickly as possible—and the delicious present, and the glorious future; and her joyous laughter rippled along the deck like a peal of silver bells, till the men grinned out of sheer sympathy and from pleasure at the sound of it.

Lyle acknowledged now that, as things had turned out, Gaston's view had been the right one; but no amount of argument could convince him that Gaston wouldn't have been perfectly justified in accepting the chance of escape when it was proffered him. I think both he and the men would have been better satisfied in their own minds with our part of the business if we had carried him off against his will and left Lepard in his place.

As we turned through the Heads into the smooth waters of Port Jackson, Captain Lemarc stole quietly up from below and joined us as we stood watching the rocky shores slip past. His sallow cheeks had still a greenish tinge, but the sight of dry land brought a sparkle of anticipation to his eyes.

'What a frightful thing this sea is,' said he, 'and how one suffers! Thank God I'm not a sailor!'

'If you were you wouldn't suffer, Captain,' said Denise; 'you'd get used to it.'

'Never!' he exclaimed, with deep conviction. 'No, not if I lived on it for a hundred years. I was ill every day of the voyage out, and I wished to die; but they would not let me. When I arrived I was a shadow—a veritable shadow. It took me months to recover.'

'I wonder you consented to come this trip,' said Denise.

'Ah, madame! duty, you understand; and besides, after six months in Noumea, one is ready to risk one's life for a change. I anticipate much pleasure from my visit to New South Wales.'

We ploughed gaily up Sydney Cove, and dropped anchor abreast of the Circular Quay; and half-an-hour later we were all, and especially Captain Lemarc, enjoying a merry lunch at the big new hotel in Collins Street.

Then Captain Lemarc, having made an astonishingly rapid recovery under the influence of solid earth and a bottle of champagne, started off, with a face attuned to the importance of his mission, to hunt up the French Consul in Wynyard Square; Lyle went back to the yacht to settle his coaling arrangements; while Denise, Gaston, and I set out for a stroll through the town.

Boulot and his master had come ashore with us, the former enjoying the immobility of the land fully as much as did Captain Lemarc. But our friend Vaurel, though his shyness had worn off somewhat in the company of Denise and myself, felt altogether too much abashed by the size of our party to join us at the hotel, and had preferred making a voyage of discovery on his own account. Boulot hung whimsically in the wind when we separated, having a mind to follow

us as being more probably productive of bones and other delicacies, and yet not liking to be parted from his master. He sat on the quay, a brindled Mr Facing-both-ways, and grinned cheerfully through his eye-teeth first at the one retreating party and then at the other, and wagged his stump of a tail spasmodically at whichever looked round at him. At last we saw him turn his back disdainfully upon us, and with his tail like a bit of iron railing, he rose despondently to the path of duty, and trotted heavily after his master.

Now, whether the telegraph office leaked (which is not likely, since Lemarc was certain to use an official cipher), or whether (which is much more probable) Captain Lemarc himself leaked—for he was full to bursting of his important news—rumours of our arrival and of the strange circumstances surrounding our visit got abroad. The *Echo* and the *Evening News* both made mention of the important event; and when we got back to the hotel quite a little mob of excited reporters from all the morning and weekly papers was awaiting us, every man of them hungering and thirsting for full and exclusive information for his own particular journal.

We learned that the Sydney papers had already published the facts concerning the gross miscarriage of justice in Gaston's case; but these irrepressible and keen-nosed young gentlemen of the press had somewhere got a hint of something more behind, and for the moment the whole end and aim of their energetic lives was to get to the bottom of it, and we had a great time of it trying to bluff them off, for we did not feel entitled to open our mouths concerning Lepard till Captain Lemarc had heard from his people at home.

But in spite of us they got hold of it somehow. Perhaps they captured Vaurel; perhaps some smart youth pulled out to the yacht and pumped the men. Anyhow, the papers next morning were full of it, and fairly accurate, too; and at midday the Governor and his wife drove up in state to visit us and offer their congratulations, and to hear the whole strange story from our own lips.

They pressed upon us the hospitality of Government House with the most charming cordiality; but Gaston for some time begged off, and it was only when he was assured of a privacy infinitely greater than any the hotel could afford that he at last consented to go.

Denise was in a state of exuberant delight. With Gaston at liberty, and going back home to receive such *amende honorable* as the mother-country could make for a gross injustice unwittingly perpetrated, she was, as she had promised, perfectly happy. She took life very joyously, and her joy was mine.

So we drove away with our new friends to the official residence, and if we had been intimate relations or friends of old standing we could not have been made more heartily welcome.



Captain Lemarc, however, had not suffered all the miseries of the sea voyage for the sake of comparing the internal arrangements of one Government House with those of another, and he preferred the liberty of the hotel. His excuses were so exceedingly ingenious, and were expressed with such immense volubility and so great a show of frankness, that they deceived nobody, not even himself. He had come for a fling, and to shake off the dust of Noumea; he was his own master, and wanted to enjoy himself in his own way.

He came tearing up in a hurry on the second day, however, to give us the news he had just received by cable: *Lepard* was to be taken back to France by a cruiser returning from the China station.

'He will be there almost as soon as you, if you stop a few days at each place. You'll be in at the death, anyway. I wish I was going,' he said. But as far as that was concerned we would willingly have exchanged places with him.

Vaurel and Boulot also preferred the freedom of the yacht. Vaurel did at all events, and Boulot's stern sense of duty forbade him to desert his master.

Three very pleasant, restful days we spent at Government House, in those very pleasant rooms overlooking the Domain and Farm Cove, with its great black warships and the many-legged water-beetles skimming incessantly between them and the shore.

I think Lady X. had had a lurking hope that Gaston would consent to at least one official dinner, or a garden party, or some little function of the kind, for the satisfaction of her many friends. But his wounds were still too raw, and he begged for privacy so modestly and so earnestly that she could not possibly feel hurt, but, on the contrary, found herself conferring a favour by sacrificing her own wishes to his, and thereby obtained almost as much enjoyment as she would have done out of the garden party.

We rode and drove about the city and its environs with the Governor and his wife, court- ing no more notice than was inevitable in such distinguished company; and on the fourth day we said good-bye to our friends, and started to cross the other half of the world on our way home.

Our voyage was prosperous and uneventful. As it was not likely that any of us would ever be round that way again, we took things easily, and saw all that was to be seen wherever we stopped to coal. From Colombo we went up to Bombay to give Denise an impression of India, thence to Aden and Suez, whence we ran over to Cairo, and joined the yacht again at Alexandria. Then we sailed to Malta, and so to Marseilles, where we left the *Clutha* to make her way back to Southampton. But the moment we touched French soil there came a sudden end to all privacy and the quiet enjoyment of life.

There was no possibility of mistaking the feeling of the warm-hearted nation.

Here was a man, young and noble, who had borne unmerited disgrace and all the sufferings it entailed with the calm endurance of a martyr. Bit by bit the whole story had leaked out, and France was waiting impatiently to elevate him to the trying position of hero.

Gaston, if he had had his own way, would have slipped quietly through to Paris, reported himself at headquarters, and placed himself at the disposal of the authorities.

But that was out of the question. The people wanted their hero, and were not to be denied. They must demonstrate their feeling for him or burst.

The authorities had come to know that Gaston des Comptes was a man above the common. They decided to open the safety-valve of popular feeling, and let it have full play. The result was that when we stepped ashore from the *Clutha's* gig we were received by the General in command of the district, with his staff; by the Prefect of Toulon and all the notabilities; and by a guard of honour drawn from Gaston's own regiment which had witnessed his degradation, while in the background a vast concourse of people roared a mighty welcome to the man who had been wronged.

It was a trying ordeal for Gaston. In the long pleasant days of our travelling together, and in the quiet communion of many night pacings of the dark deck, I had come to know this man, and to admire and love him beyond all others, for there was in him a height and depth of nobility which it amazed me beyond words to think could ever have been doubted; so I knew that he would go through this time as bravely as he had gone through a worse. I count it as one of the highest privileges, as well as one of the greatest pleasures, of my life to have stood by the side of Gaston des Comptes at this time, and to have watched the modesty and gallantry of his bearing.

I can see his fine, clear-cut face, the strength of it accentuated by the tenseness of his self-repression, which thinned the cheeks and squared the jaw, and threw into prominence the high Breton cheek-bones and the calm glow of the dark eyes, as he replied, modestly and brokenly, to the warm welcome and congratulations of the officials.

Then, escorted by the guard of honour and the roaring crowd beyond, we were driven slowly to the hotel, General C. occupying the fourth seat in the carriage, and beaming all over with genuine enjoyment of the popular feeling.

As for Denise, my wife, since the first moment my eyes fell on her pictured face in the Salon, she has always been to me the most beautiful woman in the world; but now she was absolutely transfigured. Her face was radiant and dazzling

with happiness, enjoyment, gratitude, triumph—all these and more. It was the face of a triumphant angel right from heaven, with the light of heaven outshining from it still; and the thought that this glorious creature was my wife, and happy in that state, made me at once a proud and humble and very grateful man.

How thoroughly and intensely she enjoyed this complete realisation of all her hopes and the triumphant vindication of the family honour!

I caught her only the other day reading aloud to another Gaston and another Denise—Master Gaston Lamont and Miss Denise of that ilk, aged ten and eight respectively, who were listening with open mouths and sparkling eyes—the account of it all in a treasured copy of the *Petite Marseillaise*; and my wife looked up at me with that same transfigured face of hers, and laughed a happy laugh, and said, 'What a glorious time it was, Hugh!'

Then, looking over her shoulder for a moment, while the eager youngsters urged, 'Go on, mother; tell us more of Uncle Gaston,' I read:

'Madame La Monte (*née* Des Comptes), who shared with her brother the triumph of this national welcome home, is of a beauty remarkable and indescribable. But that it is altogether sweet and noble, one would be tempted to describe it as *beauté du diable*, for assuredly it is not of the earth earthly. More correctly let us call it, then, *beauté des anges*; for if ever woman's face shone with inspired light, most assuredly did the face of Captain des Comptes' sister as we saw her yesterday. And this young lady, with her husband, a Scotsman of the noble house of La Monte—whose very name denotes a Gallic origin—

has circumnavigated the globe in that frail yacht which dropped anchor so quietly in the port yesterday morning, for—in the original intention—the simple purpose of being near the brother, of whose innocence she never had one moment's doubt; but, as it turns out by a most extraordinary coincidence, for the purpose of bringing him home to the welcome which France offers to one of the noblest and bravest of her sons.' And so on, and so on.

Then as I bent over her I kissed her smooth brown hair, and said, 'It was truly a great and glorious time, and that is just exactly how you looked.' I went out, so as not to keep the children any longer from their pleasure, and as I went I felt as I had felt that other day, as I have ever felt since first she put her hand into mine and gave her life into my keeping—a proud man and humble, but most of all profoundly grateful for this crowning blessing of my life—my wife Denise. Our privacy, as I have said, was at an end from the moment our feet touched French soil. We were public characters, and there was no getting out of it.

There was a great reception at the hotel that night, and we were perforce the centre of it all. The next morning we swept away northward, still the travelling centre of a tornado of popular feeling, which broke out afresh at every place where the train stopped.

It was the same when we reached Paris. The people were on the lookout for us, and we drove from the station to the Des Comptes' mansion in the Avenue du Bois de Boulogne, through a mob that cheered and ran, and would not be denied.

## BOTANY BAY.

By W. H. S. AUBREY, LL.D.



**A**FTER fitful attempts by Spanish, Portuguese, and Dutch navigators to explore the unknown South Seas, Captain James Cook commenced, in 1768, his famous voyage in the *Endeavour*, under the auspices of the Royal Society, and at the cost of the Government. Having accomplished the special object of observing the transit of Venus over the sun's disc, it was determined to trace the eastern coast-line of the great Southern continent, only the western side having as yet been explored. New Zealand was first sighted, and its coast-line traced; and then, in November 1769, some thirteen hundred miles of the Australasian coast, including Botany Bay, were marked on the chart. This bay is an inlet about ten miles south of the present city of Sydney, and was so named by Sir Joseph Banks and Dr Solander, two of the scientific men who accompanied Captain Cook, because of the pro-

fusion of wild plants and flowers. The name, however, has acquired a sinister and painful meaning because so long associated with the worst forms of convict life. It seems to have struck the popular imagination, and continued to be used for many years to denote any penal settlement in Australia, or transportation in general.

Cook made two subsequent voyages and further discoveries; but not until 1786, or seven years after his murder by the natives of Hawaii, was any scheme formulated for establishing a penal settlement. The chief inducement was that English felons might be sent to the other side of the world, whence there would be no possibility of their return, and where they could be cheaply kept and speedily forgotten. Before that time, in 1776, the English legislature, making a virtue of necessity, concluded that transportation to the American colonies—which had just effected their independence—had been productive of serious in-

convenience, 'by depriving the kingdom of many subjects whose labour might have proved useful to the community.' An act was therefore passed instituting hard labour at home for convicts, instead of transportation to some place abroad. Penitentiaries were established; and it was hoped that by sobriety, cleanliness, a regular course of labour, solitary confinement during the intervals of work, and due religious teaching, offenders might be inured to habits of industry, guarded from pernicious associates, and become reformed.

Just at this time, however, attention was being directed to the discoveries in the Southern hemisphere. Though the penitentiary scheme was not abandoned—for it was strongly advocated by Jeremy Bentham and others—yet it was only carried out partially, but at enormous cost, at Millbank, Tothill Fields, and elsewhere. The vast territories of Australia offered what seemed to be an unlimited field for convict colonisation. Public opinion generally preferred the establishment of penal settlements at a distance; the favourite theory was that the best mode of dealing with offenders was to remove them far from the scenes of offence and of temptation, and to cut them off by a wide and deep gulf from former connections. In the result they became far worse than they were before. Thomas Carlyle, in his peculiar phraseology, expressed the sentiment of the time in his *Latter-Day Pamphlets*, written in 1850, denouncing what he called 'A Universal Sluggard-and-Scoundrel-Protection Society,' and the 'Devil's Regiments of the Line.' For them he would only 'clear the way to the gallows,' unless they could be 'swept pretty rapidly into some Norfolk Island, into some special Convict Colony, or remote Domestic Moorland.' It must be added, however, as in the case of the American and West Indian plantations, that, besides actual criminals, political agitators were also transported to Australia from time to time, as a convenient method of disposing of and silencing them.

Captain Arthur Phillip, afterwards Admiral, was appointed the first governor of about one-half of the new continent and of the proposed convict settlement, with absolute authority, untrammelled by a council. He was in every way fitted for the novel and difficult task. He sailed in command of six transport ships, containing eight hundred and fifty convicts and two hundred and eight marines, and attended by three store-vessels and two frigates. After a tedious voyage of thirty-five weeks, the little fleet reached Botany Bay on January 18, 1788. Phillip at once pronounced the spot unsuited to the purpose, because of its flat shore and shallow waters, its exposed situation, the absence of springs, the unpromising character of the soil, and the impossibility of making secure and healthy provision for those under his charge. The ground on the south side is for the most part swampy, or a light gray

sand, requiring to be turned over and exposed to the action of the atmosphere for two or three years before it becomes fertile. The land on the north side resembles the English moors, and is covered with brushwood. It retains many of its old features, although the growth of Sydney has affected the whole district. So late as 1835 there were but few settlers on the shores of Botany Bay, descendants of the early soldiers and marines who were sent out in charge of convicts.

What Phillip did by way of exploration, and especially in selecting as the site for the future city of Sydney—named after the then Home Secretary—the spacious bay of Port Jackson, belongs to another chapter of Australian history. It was fitting that the great harbour on which Melbourne now stands should afterwards be called Port Phillip, after him. Strange to say, Captain Cook did not explore the magnificent Port Jackson, probably because it was landlocked by lofty promontories and headlands. He could have had no suspicion that just beyond was a glorious harbour extending fourteen miles inland, sufficiently large for all the navies of the world to ride securely at anchor.

Captain Phillip at once despatched a vessel to examine Norfolk Island, in the Pacific Ocean, eleven hundred miles east-north-east of Sydney. After several voyages, a small penal colony was established on this little islet, which is seven miles in length and four in breadth. This became in 1820 the chief receptacle for social wreckage, especially for reconvicted prisoners; but the penal settlement here was abandoned in 1855 as a dismal failure. Norfolk Island will always be classed with Macquarie Harbour and Port Arthur as places where military tyranny, rampant officialism, and dense ignorance of the rudiments of true penology inflicted untold evils, and made the last state of the miserable convicts far worse than the first.

By the middle of July 1788 all the prisoners and troops were landed in Port Jackson. Huts were erected and the provisions stored. In an address to the convicts, Phillip said that he would do all in his power to help those who led orderly lives and who showed a disposition to amend; but he held out no hope of mercy to any who continued in evil courses or who transgressed the regulations laid down. Serious difficulties arose when the stores were exhausted and fresh supplies did not arrive. Red-tape had asserted itself throughout the enterprise. Farming experiments failed from lack of knowledge and experience, and much precious seed was wasted. Repeated outbreaks occurred, but were put down firmly and sometimes severely. Yet more than once the position became critical. Two years after his arrival, Phillip wrote: 'Experience has taught me how difficult it is to make men industrious who have passed their lives in habits



of vice and indolence. In some cases it has been found impossible. Neither kindness nor severity has had any effect. There are many who dread punishment less than they fear labour.'

The wisdom and the beneficent influence of Phillip's rule appear by force of contrast with some incompetent and corrupt governors on his enforced retirement in 1792 through ill-health. Military martinets, with no knowledge of human nature, and devoid of administrative ability, but with an overweening sense of their own importance, aggravated by their folly the unfortunate conditions that prevailed in such a community. One of the worst—even exceeding Captain William Bligh, whose conduct excited the mutiny on the *Bounty* in April 1789—was Sir Ralph Darling, governor from 1826 to 1831. He is described as 'a man of precedents of the true red-tape school; neat, exact, punctual, industrious, arbitrary, spiteful, and commonplace.' Matters culminated when two soldiers charged with larceny had spiked iron collars placed round their necks, so that they could not lie down, and attached to their wrists and ankles were heavy chains so short that they could not stand erect. One of the men was so inconsiderate as to die under the treatment, and in spite of attempts to hush up the matter there was a great outcry, the news of which reached England, got into the papers, and was discussed in parliament, so that it was deemed expedient to allow Darling to resign.

Yet the convicts did not fare any better. Ample evidence is furnished by what took place before parliamentary committees in 1812, 1822, 1832, 1837, 1838, and 1847, and from the reports of special commissioners sent out to investigate. A few extracts will indicate the facts established and the conclusions reached after a number of competent witnesses had been examined. 'The community was composed of the very dregs of society, of men proved by experience to be unfit to be at large in any society, and who were sent from British jails and turned loose to mix with one another in the desert; together with a few taskmasters who were to set them to work in the open wilderness, and with the military who were to keep them from revolt. The consequences of this strange assemblage were vice, frightful disease, hunger, and dreadful mortality among the settlers. The convicts were decimated by pestilence on the voyage, and again decimated by famine on their arrival; and the most hideous cruelty was practised towards the unfortunate natives.' The character and condition of the female convicts is described in the parliamentary reports in terms that cannot be quoted; but the statements rested upon indisputable testimony. 'The punishments inflicted, even for trivial offences, are severe, even to excessive cruelty.' 'The condition of the convicts in the chain-gangs is one of great privation and unhappiness. This description of punishment belongs to a barbarous

age, and merely tends to increase the desperation of the character of an offender.' 'Transportation is not a single punishment, but rather a series of punishments embracing every degree of human suffering.' 'It is not only inefficient in producing the moral regeneration of an offender, but it demoralises those whom accidental circumstances, more than a really vicious nature, have seduced into crime.' 'The qualities of inefficiency for good and efficiency for evil are inherent in the system, which is not susceptible of any satisfactory improvement.' All the above are parliamentary statements.

If some governors, armed with resolute powers, acted harshly and arbitrarily, it was only to be expected that their conduct would be imitated by subordinates, who were allowed, for example, to hire convict labour for personal gain, and to pay for it mainly in vile and adulterated spirits, bought from the Government at five or six shillings a gallon and retailed at truck prices ranging up to seven or eight pounds. The results were what might have been anticipated: robbery, violence, and murder were of daily occurrence. Brutal attacks on the natives provoked retaliation in kind. Risings among the convicts were put down by the bullet and the halter. Floggings for lesser offences were frequent and severe, often ending in death. This was the beginning of the terrible chapter that forms so dark a blot on early Australian history.

The infant colony had a long and severe struggle for existence. It was at first a penal settlement and nothing more. There were but two classes. On the one hand there were criminal bondsmen who had forfeited their independence and were doomed to labour for the State without wages, and on the other hand were officials to guard them and see that the allotted tasks were performed. The convicts were subjected to rigid discipline, ruled as with a rod of iron, fed on the coarsest food, and left to the mercy of overseers who were often capricious and tyrannical. Shiploads of social wreckage continued to arrive yearly. Between 1788 and 1791 the number was nearly four thousand; and down to the year 1836 the total number transported was ninety-six thousand five hundred and fifty-eight. The aggregating of such characters tended to their demoralisation. The bulk of convict labour remained in the hands of local authorities. The policy initiated by Governor Macquarie between 1809 and 1821, of erecting huge public buildings in Sydney, was severely criticised, yet it cannot be denied that some of the great works then undertaken proved of incalculable service to the young colony. The development of its vast resources and its early advance in wealth and prosperity were in a great measure due to the magnificent roads, bridges, and other facilities of communication which were commenced at that time by convict labour. Without it, the difficulty

of clearing the district on which the city of Sydney now stands would have proved almost insurmountable.

With the growing public sentiment in favour of an amelioration of the criminal laws, by imposing the extreme penalty only for murder, there was a rapid increase in the number transported to Australia. The enormous expense of the convict establishments there rendered some changes inevitable, and a plan of 'assignment' was introduced; in other words, convicts were freely lent to any persons who would relieve the authorities of the burdensome charge. In 1836, out of a convict population of forty thousand one hundred and fifty-eight, those assigned numbered twenty thousand two hundred and one. In order to encourage free settlers, special inducements to emigrate had been offered to persons having private means. It was felt by the home authorities that the introduction of a respectable class of people was essential to the future well-being of the community. Large tracts of land were therefore made over, either as a gift or at a nominal price. To meet the difficulty about labour, the method of assignment rapidly developed on the wide areas of grazing land that formed the sheep-stations in the interior. As the colony grew richer and more populous, numerous enterprises were set on foot, in which convict labour was turned to account. There was abundance of work in the growing towns for skilled labour. Handicraftsmen, clerks, and book-keepers were in demand, leading to keen competition for the best hands among the new drafts that continually arrived. These found pleasant, congenial, and profitable occupation. Many clever and expert rogues attained ease and affluence; while the dull, the unlettered, and the unskilful, who may have come out in the same ships, and whose offences may have been venial in comparison, were doomed to perpetual toil of the hardest description. To the former transportation was no punishment, but often the reverse. Relatives and unconvicted accomplices at home were able to bring out money obtained, by old nefarious transactions. There were also not a few cases in which assignments were obtained of newly-arrived friends.

Much evil was produced by the employment of convicts in positions of trust in the Government offices or as schoolmasters. It was manifest that no salutary dread was produced on offenders. Transportation was no longer exile to an unknown and inhospitable land, but to one flowing with milk and honey, where numerous friends and associates had already gone. It was stated by the Ordinary of Newgate that the generality of those transported viewed it as a party of pleasure: 'I have heard them, when the sentence has been passed by the Recorder, return thanks for it, and seem overjoyed at their sentence.' Glowing descriptions came back to England of the wealth which any clever fellow might easily amass, and

stories freely circulated of men who, having 'left their country for their country's good,' had made ample fortunes in a few years. Some, it was said, had large incomes derived from shops and farms, public-houses, and ships. They rode in carriages and kept up great establishments.

The ordinary assigned convict—the mere hewer of wood and drawer of water—was, however, liable to harsh and capricious treatment for petty or imaginary offences. The person to whom he was assigned might prove to be kind and indulgent; or he might be hard and exacting, unreasonable and arbitrary, not discerning good conduct from bad; or an ignorant, vulgar despot, who treated his servants like slaves, cursing and abusing for no sufficient cause. The master, though not invested by law with uncontrolled power over the assigned convict, possessed great authority, which might be abused in numerous ways that precluded redress. Complaint made of alleged insubordination, though unsubstantiated, was sufficient to induce a paid magistrate, armed with the tremendous powers of summary jurisdiction, to order a severe flogging, or solitary confinement, or both, perhaps consignment to the horrors of chain-gangs, or retransportation to the lowest depths of wretchedness on Norfolk Island, where Dante's inscription over the portal of the Inferno would have been literally true: 'All hope abandon, ye that enter here.'

If flogging is ever efficacious in checking crime, the convict colonies ought to have been the most orderly and virtuous places on earth, for the 'cat-o'-nine-tails' was in perpetual use. In 1833 there were two thousand nine hundred and sixty-four floggings in New South Wales, and above one hundred and eight thousand lashes were inflicted, chiefly for alleged insolence, insubordination, and neglect of work. In Van Diemen's Land the number of lashes was fifty thousand. The 'cat' was a much more formidable instrument than the one in the army or the navy. Police surveillance was a mere form. Convicts came and went pretty much at will after working hours. Sydney and other rising towns were hotbeds of vice. Masters as a rule made no attempt to improve their convict-servants; indeed, many were unfitted to do so, being themselves men of low character, or 'emancipists,' as old convicts who had been pardoned or had completed their term were called.

The assignment system was emphatically condemned by the best governors and other officials in the colony. If one of the men proved incorrigible after repeated lashes or imprisonment on bread and water, he was returned to the authorities and set to work in chain-gangs on the roads or on the public works. Even then escapes were frequent, and thus recruits were gained for the bushrangers, who became a scourge and a terror to the colony. Their characters are delineated and their atrocious deeds described in such books as

Rolf Boldrewood's *Robbery Under Arms*, in Marcus Clarke's *Stories of Australia in the Early Days*, in Haddon Chambers's *Captain Swift*, in John Lang's *Clever Criminals*, in George E. Boxall's *Story of the Australian Bushrangers*, and in James Bonwick's *Bushrangers*. Much valuable information is also given in *A Narrative of a Visit to the Australian Colonies*, by James Backhouse, a member of the Society of Friends, who spent the years 1832 to 1838 in a voluntary mission. The modern idea of a bushranger is that of a bold highwayman of the Dick Turpin or Claude Duval type. The reality was a desperado, armed with pistols, riding a stolen horse, robbing houses, rifling passengers, and often committing murder as if in wanton sport and from sheer brutality. Their deeds of violence and cruelty excited admiration among the convicts who had served their terms. When they were tracked and captured their fate was commiserated, if attempts at rescue proved futile.

An awful and a harrowing picture of the convict system is drawn in the pages of a popular novel entitled, *For the Term of his Natural Life*, by Marcus Clarke. Although a work of fiction, its statements are verified, in the main, by official documents. Indeed, it is scarcely possible to exaggerate the horrors that prevailed, or the cruelty, lust, injustice, and brutality. The hero of the tale, a man wrongfully convicted of murder, is transported for life, and actually endures twenty years of revolting punishment, which is minutely described, with the terrorism and savagery and corruption engendered by the system. The miserable wretches, after rotting in the English hulks for a year or two, were crowded by hundreds, ill-fed and ill-clad, with no attempt at classification, on board ship, in which—if they survived the risks of famine, pestilence, mutiny, fire, and shipwreck—they were conveyed during the greater part of a year to a life of alternate slavery and rebellion.

Between 1787 and 1796 the average mortality during the voyage was one in ten; while in 1799 the horrible jail-fever broke out on one vessel, and out of three hundred on board one-third perished. The life is described as being that of a floating hell. Innumerable and unspeakable atrocities were committed by convicts on one another, in defiance of cruel attempts at repression, or because of these, and with the avowed purpose of escaping from their torture by death. 'More severity,' and, if that did not secure the end, 'still more severity,' was the only recognised way of dealing with criminals, many of whom were really the creation of unwise laws and merciless prison regulations. Horrible cruelties were perpetrated upon the convicts by officers, as is proved by the parliamentary reports. This brutality, of course, increased the savagery of the victims.

Failing all other attempts at subjugation—permanent reformation was seldom attempted or

thought of—the most hardened offenders were kept closely within stockades and heavily ironed. These places became cesspools of iniquity. To quote the words of one who knew them well: 'The heart of a man who went to them was taken from him, and he was given that of a beast.' The convicts herded together and became more hardened, degraded, vicious, and brutalised. Reckless despair possessed them, and death on the gallows was welcomed as a relief. Murders were not infrequent, avowedly in the hope of a speedy trial and execution, as the only way of escape from unendurable horrors. Archbishop Ullathorne, then Roman Catholic prison chaplain in the colony, testified before a parliamentary committee respecting one large party of men thus sentenced: 'As I mentioned the names of those who were to die, one after another dropped on their knees and thanked God that they were to be delivered from that horrible place; while the others remained standing, mute and weeping. It was the most horrible scene I ever witnessed.' During the year 1834 forty-four such executions took place in New South Wales, out of a population under seventy thousand. In the same year there were only thirty-four executions in England and Wales, with a population of fourteen millions. The number would have been nearly nine thousand if the same proportion had been maintained as in New South Wales.

The more reputable sections of Australian society began so early as 1832 to protest against the transportation system. Apart from the evils caused by new arrivals, a numerous party had arisen, consisting of 'emancipists' and ticket-of-leave men, who threatened to swamp the respectable and untainted members of the community. As years passed on the prevalence of crime and the low tone of morality created deeper disgust. The late Chief-Justice A. Beckett pointed out the right road to reform when he said that criminals should be considered as much objects of pity as of indignation. Judge Burton, in 1835, when charging the grand jury of Sydney, made an emphatic protest, and declared that transportation must come to an end: 'While it existed the colonies could never rise to their proper positions, and could not claim free institutions. In a word, Australia suffered in its whole moral aspect.' This bold and forcible language commanded attention, and awakened responsive echoes in England from Archbishop Whately and others. Honourable mention should also be made of the Roman Catholic Bishop Willson in arousing public attention, so that at length outraged humanity, both at home and in the colonies, indignantly demanded of the Government an abandonment of a system under which the worst evils and crimes were found to exist. The moral and the economic evils were pointed out. With regard to the latter, the cost between 1787 and 1837 was officially stated at eight million pounds; but it was really more, owing



to the confused method of accounts. At the latter date, and for some years previously, it averaged a quarter of a million annually, while the results were wholly incommensurate with the outlay.

Between 1835 and 1840 a powerful party was formed in New South Wales, pledged to put an end to transportation. A feeling of hostility to the system was also growing in England. Another committee of the House of Commons made a searching investigation in 1837, and its report compelled the Government to give way, as it was impossible to ignore the protests of the colonists when backed up by such an overwhelming evidence and such an authoritative judgment. Orders were issued in 1840 to stay the departure of any more convicts; but the stream was merely diverted to Van Diemen's Land—or Tasmania, as it is now called—which, having been used since 1803 as a penal settlement for refractory convicts, was now converted into one vast colonial prison. During thirty years sixty-four thousand three hundred convicts were transported thither from Great Britain. With this, however, the present article does not propose to deal, beyond recording

that the colony was reduced to bankruptcy, and that all the evils and horrors described as prevailing in New South Wales and on Norfolk Island were repeated in Tasmania, until the people finally and peremptorily refused to allow any more convicts to land, as Cape Colony had done in 1849, under threat of a revolt.

The formation of a new settlement in North Australia was contemplated; but the project, though warmly supported by Mr Gladstone, then Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, had to be abandoned. After a similar attempt in Western Australia, an act was passed in 1853 substituting shorter sentences of penal servitude at home for transportation abroad. With wiser and more humane treatment, it is gratifying to know that jails, which were once to be seen in every little town of New South Wales, have been in not a few instances converted into factories and stores. The convict taint may be said to have disappeared from the community, although for many years references to transportation were not deemed polite in colonial society, lest they might glance, even obliquely, at near relatives, and thus open up unpleasant chapters in family histories.

## ‘NEVER HEARD OF.’

### MYSTERIES OF THE ATLANTIC FERRY.



ERRIBLE as such a disaster as befell *La Bourgogne* in the Atlantic two years ago certainly is, it was not the most appalling the world's greatest ferry has claimed. That a magnificent ship should go down, carrying

with her most of those on board, is a great calamity; but there is a melancholy satisfaction in knowing her fate exactly, and where she disappeared.

No such knowledge is, however, obtainable of many vessels which have sailed from English or American ports with every prospect of a safe and speedy voyage across ‘the pond,’ but which never reached their destination; their only record the words, ‘Never heard of.’

The steam service between Great Britain and the States had only been fairly inaugurated when the news came of that appalling disaster to the *President*, which is remembered by many who are now living. That vessel belonged to the unlucky British and American Steam Navigation Company, and her performances on the Atlantic were anything but successful. She first sailed from Liverpool on 17th July 1840. On 11th March 1841 she left New York with one hundred and thirty-six persons on board. It is known that two days later she encountered a very heavy gale, but after that nothing is known of her. She had disappeared, and all on board went with her. Amongst the passengers were a son of the

Duke of Richmond and a well-known comedian of the day, Mr Tyrone Power.

Far more terrible was the fate of the *City of Glasgow*, one of the steamers of the old Inman Line. This vessel was the first Inman boat, and traded between Glasgow and New York. A beautiful Clyde-built craft of 1600 tons, it was thought she could withstand even the fury of the Atlantic Ocean. In addition to her engines, she could, being barque-rigged, carry an enormous amount of canvas. Her crew numbered seventy, and there was accommodation for over five hundred passengers. The ill-fated vessel left port on 1st March 1854 with four hundred and eighty persons on board, and was never again heard of. For mere numbers, the *City of Glasgow* holds the Atlantic record amongst steamers which have ‘disappeared,’ although collision has caused heavier loss of life on the ferry.

In the fifties there was a famous Atlantic organisation known as the Collins Line. Some noble vessels were constructed for that line, amongst them the paddle-steamers *Arctic* and *Pacific*, costing nearly two hundred thousand pounds each. On 27th September 1854 the *Arctic* was run into by a small French steamer off Newfoundland, and three hundred and twenty-two lives were lost, amongst these the managing director of the company, Mr Collins, and his wife, son, and daughter. The shock of this disaster had scarcely passed when the *Pacific* left

port, never again to be seen or heard of. She sailed from Liverpool on 23rd September 1856, and disappeared with the two hundred and forty people who were on board. These catastrophes did much to crush the American firm, which was trying hard to secure the first place in the Atlantic passenger traffic.

Only five months later the steamship *Tempest*, of the Anchor Line, was added to the increasing list of mysterious disappearances on the Atlantic. She sailed on 26th February 1857, with a crew and passengers numbering one hundred and fifty all told, and was never seen again. It was with the *Tempest* that the Anchor Line began its service between Glasgow and New York.

Strangely enough, it was an Anchor Liner that furnished the next case of 'never heard of.' This was the steamer *United Kingdom*, which disappeared with eighty persons. She left port on 17th April 1868.

It then became the turn of the Inman Line again to record the loss of one of its ships. This was the *City of Boston*, which on 28th January 1870, with one hundred and seventy-seven passengers and crew, left port, well found, and with every prospect of a safe and speedy trip, but utterly vanished from mortal ken.

A vessel called the *Scanderia*, of the Anglo-Egyptian Line, a British organisation, sailed on 8th October 1872, and nothing was ever heard of her afterwards. She had thirty-eight persons on board on leaving the port.

Once more the Anchor Line suffered. The *Ismailia*, sailing on 27th September 1873, and carrying fifty-two all told, disappeared and left no trace of the fate which had befallen her. The Anchor Line was indeed hard hit in many periods of its history. Over and above the disasters named as coming under one particular class, there was the *Britannia*, which was wrecked off the island of Arran early in 1873, but without loss of life; the *Anglia*, lost at sea in 1880 through collision, without loss of life; the *Macedonia*, stranded on the Mull of Kintyre in 1881; and the *Utopia*, ten years later, which collided with a British warship in Gibraltar Bay, with a loss of five hundred and sixty-three lives.

Early in 1877 the *Colombo*, a Wilson Liner, with forty-four persons on board, commenced the voyage across the Atlantic, but never arrived. The next ferry-boat to meet this fate was a Belgian, the *Herman Ludwig*, with fifty passengers and crew. That was in September 1878. In December of the same year a British vessel called the *Homer*, having forty-three persons on board, disappeared completely; so, in 1881, did the *City of Limerick*, carrying the same number. That was on 8th January, and the line to which the ship belonged was the Ross. On 13th November 1881 the *City of London*, another vessel of the same line, and carrying forty-one all told, left port never again to be heard of—two appalling

catastrophes to the ships of one firm in less than a year.

A Wilson boat again—the *Humber*—had to be described in 1885 as 'never heard of.' She sailed on 15th February, having fifty-six persons on board; but between her and the *City of London* there were the *Straits of Dover*, which sailed on 3rd January 1883, with twenty-seven on board; and the *Coniston*, another British ship, carrying twenty-seven persons, which left port on 24th December 1884. Neither of these steamships ever got across the Atlantic, and the particulars of their fate are not exactly known.

The *Erin*, of the National Line, with seventy-two persons on board, was lost in 1889, nothing ever being heard of her after she left port on 31st December. Scarcely a year later the *Thanemore*, a Johnston Liner, with forty-three passengers and crew, came to the same end; and on 11th February 1893 the *Naronic*, one of the White Star boats, sailed with seventy-four all told, and was never heard of. The *Naronic* was a new twin-screw cargo-vessel, so built and fitted as to weather any gale, and ably officered and manned. The disappearance of this steamer created a profound sensation.

As we have seen, 'never heard of' accounts for nineteen fine Atlantic steamers, carrying passengers and cargoes, with a heavy loss of life—not far short of two thousand. Many theories have been put forward as to the causes which led to the destruction of these ships, amongst others that infernal machines must have in more than one case accounted for the loss of both craft, crew, and passengers. Apart from such a supposition, it is quite probable that terrific Atlantic seas have overwhelmed many of these missing steamships, and that others have gone down quickly and bodily after colliding with icebergs and submerged derelicts. Master mariners who know well the Atlantic Ocean and its perils have generally attributed the loss of these vessels to the causes last mentioned.

#### A SONG OF HOPE.

HEAVY the brooding mist; all prone and still  
The lean and yellow grass, the bracken brown.  
O'er gleaming moss are rilllets trickling down  
To meet the burn and flood it past its fill,  
Till, torrent-like, it dashes down the hill  
In tipsy sport and cruel, glad to drown  
The timid, fluttering leaves—of late the crown  
Of trees now gaunt and shivering in the chill.  
A dreary scene! And yet 'twill change ere long.  
Soon radiant smiles will dimple Nature's face;  
The sunny air resound with floating song;  
Fern, flower, and leaf all beam with new-born grace.  
E'en so, in quick relay Life's changes throng—  
Darkness to light, and tears to joy give place.

JOS. CARMICHAEL.



# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### SOME BOOKS IN MY LIBRARY.

By the EDITOR.



WILLIAM HAZLITT, essayist and critic, tells us that he does not think any the worse of a book for having survived a generation or two—he has more confidence in the dead than the living. My personal tastes agree with Hazlitt's; and many of my books belong to the category thus approved by lapse of time. My collections are miscellaneous; but I have always been ambitious of bringing together a complete series of works written and published by an ancestor of two generations back.

My opportunities in this direction have perhaps been more fortunate than may have been the case with other collectors. Turning to the shelves containing the works of William and Robert Chambers, one of the first volumes to catch my eye is an ancient, and inside tattered, Family Bible. Bound in stout leather, and bearing the date 1606, the book has reached me as eighth in descent from Mr James Chambers, who resided in Peebles during the seventeenth century. It contains among other early autographs that of another James Chambers, grandson of the above, who tells us that he was baptised upon the 24th day of November 1699. Then occurs the signature of his son William, born in 1730, down to William Chambers, its more recent possessor, who with his brother founded *Chambers's Journal* and the publishing house which bears their joint names.

If books could tell tales, the experience of this ancient volume during the last hundred years of life would provide much curious reading and food for reflection. After almost daily use at Peebles during two hundred years, it left the old county town early in the century to follow the shattered fortunes of its owner, the writer's great-grandfather. Saved from the final downfall of this individual, it probably passed direct into the hands of his eldest son, and witnessed in turn a successful career extending over a period of sixty years. I hope it has now found its final resting-place, and that it may always remain a valued

heirloom in the possession of the writer and his descendants.

Passing from what is no more than a family curiosity, I come to some of the earliest works written and published by the Brothers Chambers. William, in the Memoir of his brother Robert, says that, in 1820, to vary the monotony of his occupation, he had for some time been making efforts at literary composition. The result was a small volume containing an account of the Scottish Gypsies, embellished with a coarse copperplate frontispiece of what is termed 'The Fight at Lowrie's Den.' The full title of my own copy, dated 1821, is '*Exploits, Curious Anecdotes, and Sketches of the Most Remarkable Scottish Gypsies or Tinklers, together with Traits of their Origin, Character, and Manners.*' Edinburgh: Printed and sold by William Chambers, 1820.' This pamphlet, which is extremely rare, was published in paper covers, at sixpence, and seems to have gone through three editions. It may be held to represent the author's first literary and publishing venture. About this period Robert Chambers joined his brother William, and the Gypsy brochure was quickly followed by *The Kaleidoscope, or Edinburgh Amusement*, a fortnightly periodical published at threepence, which came to an end after its eighth number, in 1822. It was almost entirely written by Robert Chambers, and some of its contents are included in the author's collected works. Of this curious early periodical I am the fortunate possessor of three bound copies. Other early works of this writer also in my possession are a *Life of the Black Dwarf, or David Ritchie*, the original of the character of Elshender in *Tales of My Landlord* (printed and published in 1821); and another trifle of the same period is *Ocean Rhymes, Illustrative of the Sentiments and Songs of British Seamen*, by John Denovan, published by Robert Chambers, 1824. An interesting account of Denovan's life is given in the already-mentioned Memoir. Although no better than a porter to a tea-dealer in Leith Walk, he was always over-



flowing with allusions to Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats. A little crazy on poetical subjects, he by an easy transition became half-mad on politics, and edited a weekly periodical called *The Patriot*, desperately Radical in character. His poetical pieces were favourably noticed by Sir Walter Scott, who occasionally looked in upon him at his den in Leith Wynd, Edinburgh, where he latterly made a living by coffee-roasting, and where he died in 1827. The writer possesses a curious letter from Denovan to William Chambers, written from London in 1820.

We also learn from the same Memoir of an edition of Burns's Poems printed and sold by William Chambers; but this I have never seen, and no copy is known to Burns collectors. A well-known Edinburgh bookseller lately told me that he had searched for this book for forty years, so far without success. The publisher himself had no copy, but had been heard to say years ago that the work was bound in yellow wrappers and sold, I think, at sixpence. Seven hundred copies were done up, and these seem to have been readily sold, and thus probably read out of existence. I give this information for the benefit of Burns enthusiasts and those who frequent the bookstalls. Should a copy ever turn up, I hope the fortunate purchaser will communicate with me.

I now come to the work which perhaps of all others brought fame to its author—the well-known *Traditions of Edinburgh*. One of my valued possessions is a copy of this book in six monthly parts, and even that is but a third edition. The only real guide to a first edition of this scarce book is the absence of a note at page 80 of the first volume, referring to two previous editions. I am fortunate in owning a bound copy of this genuine first edition. The work after the issue of the first part received much encouragement from Sir Walter Scott, who supplied the author with several folio pages of closely-written material. This Scott manuscript is now before me, and so far as I know has never been printed. As any original matter from 'The Author of *Waverley*' must be of general interest, I make no excuse in quoting the following extracts. Speaking of the Buccleuch family, Scott gives some interesting notes on the first Duchess, who married the Duke of Monmouth, and, long surviving him, made a second marriage, and died in 1732. Colonel Charteris, notorious as a gamester, extortioner, and profligate, died in the same month at Stoneyhill, near Musselburgh. Scott's story runs thus:

'The Duchess of Buccleuch and Monmouth was the last lady in Scotland who had pages in the proper acceptation of the word—that is, young gentlemen of good birth who learned their formula in attending on persons of quality. The last of her attendants of this sort was a general officer; I forget his name. If a letter was delivered, the domestic gave it to the page, the page to the

waiting gentlewoman (always a lady), and she at length to the Duchess. She kept a tight hand over her clan and tenants, but was on the whole beloved. Her lameness was not so visible as your informer mentions. She was, however, plain, as appears from her portraits, one of which I have; and what is more, even Dryden, who inscribes a play to her, talks much of her wit but not a word of her beauty, which shows the case was desperate. She was supposed to have been courted by James II.; but His Majesty chose such ugly mistresses as induced his brother to say that his confessor had assigned them for penances. I never heard there was anything improper in her intimacy with the king, which certainly saved her own estate from forfeiture in the Duke of Monmouth's rebellion. She was buried on the same day with the too much celebrated Colonel Charteris. At the funeral of Henry, Duke of Buccleuch, ten or twelve years since, I was shown an old man who had been at the Duchess of Monmouth's funeral and Colonel Charteris's also. He could still walk to Edinburgh, yet must have been nearly 100 years old. He said the day was most dreadfully stormy, which all the world agreed was owing to the Devil carrying off Charteris. The mob broke in upon the mourners, and threw cats, dogs, and packs of cards upon the coffin. The gentlemen drew their swords and cut away among the rioters; and in the confusion one little man was pushed into the grave, and the sextons, who of course were somewhat rapid in the discharge of their office, began to shovel the earth in upon the quick and the dead. My grandfather by the mother's side was present, his wife, Jean Swinton of Swinton, being a cousin of the Charteris family. He was much hurt, and I have heard my mother describe the horror of the family when he came home with his clothes bloody and his sword broken.'

Again, referring to the sojourn of a well-known foreign princess in Edinburgh, Scott says: 'Princess Dashkoff made a great sensation in Edinburgh. The people have annexed our British ideas of pre-eminence to the title of princess, though on the Continent it is inferior to that of duchess. Princess Dashkoff took advantage of this mistake to take precedence of the present Duchess of Buccleuch, who, not much pleased at this breach of ceremony, determined on the next occasion to take her own rank and walk first out of the room. The Princess guessed what she was about to do, and just as they were going to move, came up to the Duchess and took hold of her familiarly, with "*Allons, ma chère Duchesse, point de cérémonie.*"'

The friendship established at this time continued until the great writer's death; and his last letter written to Robert Chambers, in which he bewails his failing health, is now in my possession, and may be found printed in full in William Chambers's Memoir of his brother.

The working library of a student and man of letters is seldom of much interest to the mere

collector of book rarities. At his death, in 1871, Robert Chambers left many hundreds of volumes; but these had in most cases been purchased in connection with his own literary labours, and, besides works of reference, consisted of ordinary standard editions. Some few of his books, however, were of more than ordinary interest and importance, the gem of the collection being a manuscript work known as *The Lyon in Mourning*, and dealing with the rising of 1745. This manuscript, which was bequeathed by him to the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, has lately been printed *in extenso* as one of the publications of the Scottish History Society. Shortly before Dr Chambers's library was dispersed, an old and valued servant of the firm of W. & R. Chambers, now, alas! no more, happened to be at St Andrews, where Dr Chambers had built a house, and passed the last years of his life. Having at all times access to the house of his late master, my old friend found his way into the library, and no doubt from sentimental motives, and having in view the interests of myself and others, who were at that time too young to choose for themselves, he brought away with him to Edinburgh several volumes of much interest and value. Some of these are with me now, and consist of two interleaved copies of the *Traditions of Edinburgh*, one of which contains numerous holograph notes by Sir Walter Scott and Henry Mackenzie. In his preface to the last edition of the *Traditions*, Dr Chambers records how Henry Mackenzie, the venerable author of *The Man of Feeling*, who was born in the year 1745, called at his place of business, and having seen the first number of the new work, immediately offered to supply the author with further notes and information. Some of these notes are embodied in the two volumes to which I refer.

It must have been about the same period or earlier that Dr Chambers first read *Waverley*. Some years ago, and long before the present demand arose for first editions of Sir Walter Scott's works, I was myself so fortunate as to find a copy in three volumes of the very rare first edition of *Waverley*, in original binding, and published in 1814. This copy contains many manuscript notes by Robert Chambers, and in one of these he points out a curious error of the author, by which Evan Dhu Maccombich is made the foster-brother of Fergus M'Ivor, and at the same time both the chief and his sister are stated to have been born and brought up in France. I do not know if the author's attention was afterwards drawn to this contradiction. Again he writes, quoting from page 328 of the same edition, 'The courtyard was totally empty, but *Waverley* still stood there.' Was it ever, I wonder, pointed out to the author that this is a bull? The 1814 edition of Scott's first novel is now a rarity of the first water, and held in great esteem by book-collectors. It is very much scarcer

than any early edition of the author's later works, as only one thousand copies were printed, and a new edition was almost immediately required. I possess another copy of the book in the same three-volume form, the eighth edition, dated 1821.

The meeting between Scott and Robert Burns has often been described, and forms an important event in the life of the great novelist; but Scott was too young to enjoy any acquaintance with Burns's contemporary, Robert Fergusson the Scottish poet. Six years older than Burns, Fergusson was born in 1750, and died in 1774, when Walter Scott was but two years old. I need not refer here to the well-known incident of Burns's visit during his residence in Edinburgh to the tomb of Fergusson in Canongate Churchyard, Edinburgh.

In 1804 a new edition of Fergusson's poems was published in facsimile of the early octavo editions of Burns's works. My copy of this edition contains, fastened inside the boards, an envelope containing a lock of Fergusson's hair, with the following note: 'Specimen of the hair of Robert Fergusson the Scottish poet. I procured it from Miss Inverarity, grandniece of the poet. July 24, 1828.—R. CHAMBERS.' In another manuscript inserted in the volume we are told that the poet's father resided in 1765 in Warriston Close, Edinburgh, where, as it happens, the printing office of Messrs W. & R. Chambers was established early in the century, and remains at the present time.

I may conclude these desultory remarks with a notice of two other eighteenth-century works in my collection. Both are very scarce, and their possession would well repay a search by frequenters of the bookstall and saleroom.

Allan Ramsay is best known by his pastoral poem, *The Gentle Shepherd*; but five years earlier he published his miscellaneous poems. My copy, which is a crown octavo, in original leather binding, bears the title, '*Poems by Allan Ramsay*. Edinburgh: Printed for the Author at The Mercury, opposite to Niddry's Wynd, 1720,' and has no less than six different title-pages. This work may originally have been published in parts. The locality containing Allan Ramsay's first printing-office existed until 1785, when it was removed, with other ancient wynds and closes, to make room for the buildings at the entrance to the South Bridge, Edinburgh. It is referred to in the other work under notice, *The Directory for the City of Edinburgh, 1774*. This is a small octavo, 'Printed by P. Williamson, and sold at his general penny post-office, Luckenbooths, Edinburgh.' The work contains about four thousand seven hundred entries, and concludes with the following advertisement: 'The publisher continues to print advertisements, shop bills, &c., upon his new invented Military and Maritime Printing press. Those who choose to employ him in the printing line may depend upon having their work well done, and soon done, and at moderate rates. Likewise are published the Psalms of David in



meter, upon a very small scale, price 6d. in sheets, and when bound may be transported in an ordinary snuff-box.'

In a second article I may perhaps describe some contents of my library of a later date, and

entirely different in character from those early Edinburgh publications so closely interwoven with the history of my own family both as authors and publishers of popular literature.

C. E. S. CHAMBERS.

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

### CHAPTER XXVIII.—THE BEGINNING OF THE END.



HERE now came a busy time for all of us. The house seemed never free from visitors, who flocked in to tender their congratulations and to see with their own eyes and hear with their own ears the principal actors in this dramatic little episode of real life: old friends of the family, who vowed they had never for one moment believed the insinuations against Gaston; officers and officials of all degrees, who came out of pure good-fellowship and curiosity; press-men and artists, who came out of curiosity alone; and to every one it was necessary to be as polite and informative as one's weariness of it all permitted. Among our first callers was the Abbé Dieufoy. After congratulating Gaston, he took snuff very elegantly and regarded Denise and myself with his head whimsically on one side as though appraising us.

'Monsieur Lamont,' he said at length, 'you have picked up the French language with extraordinary rapidity.'

'I have had an excellent teacher, monsieur,' I said.

'All the same,' he said, with half-a-dozen knowing nods, 'your progress has been most remarkable.'

'I found him a most apt pupil, Monsieur l'Abbé,' laughed Denise.

'He does you infinite credit, madame,' said the abbé.

'And Madame the Duchesse de St Ouen?' I asked.

'She is well, but has hardly yet recovered from her disappointment in connection with certain events. However,' he said, with a gentle shrug, 'it is not possible for every one to be satisfied in this world. If I may judge by appearances, madame's disappointment is not shared in certain other quarters; and if the happiness of the greater number has resulted—*que voulez-vous?*'

Monsieur l'Abbé looked as if he would have liked, as the spiritual adviser of the family of Des Comptes, to enter into other questions; but fresh visitors came in, and those questions were not put, and never have been put.

Gaston presented himself at the office of the Minister of War next morning by special command, and was received by that functionary with impressive cordiality; later in the day he

was received in like manner by the President himself.

Then, in due course, he was brought before another court-martial, which formally reversed the decision of the original one, pronounced him guiltless of the charges on which he had previously been condemned, restored him therefore to the position he was in before the trial, and left it to the authorities to make such reparation as they deemed advisable for the undeserved suffering and obloquy which had been placed upon him by Lepard's treachery.

What form such reparation would take had been a matter of much debate in the papers, and many wild suggestions had been made. I cannot deny that Denise and myself had also discussed the matter between ourselves; for of the righteousness of such reparation there could be no question, and I must confess that I could not rise to the full height of the *Des Comptes'* sense of honour and dignity when my wife stoutly asserted that Gaston would accept nothing.

But when it came to the point, that was the position which he quietly took up. Many offers were made to him, we knew, though he never discussed them with us. But he would have none of them. Finally, under extreme pressure, and simply as the official *cachet* of his complete rehabilitation by his chiefs, he accepted a double step and became the youngest colonel in the army. But, incidentally, the high stand he took in this whole matter wrought powerfully on his future. He was accepted everywhere, inside official circles and outside, as a man whose honour was beyond question and whose absolute trustworthiness none might dispute, and his subsequent rise was rapid. He was general of division at thirty-five, and has not yet reached the full height of advancement.

Lepard had arrived before us. His voyaging had not been so leisurely as ours. Report said that from the moment he came into the hands of the authorities out in Noumea he had been under the strictest surveillance day and night, but that he had never uttered one single word. In my own mind I came to wonder if, by some strange dispensation, he had not been stricken dumb; for it seemed incredible that simply of his own strong will he should have maintained so absolute a silence for so long a time.

Vaurel had been examined as to his knowledge



of the murder, and in the result Louis Vard, Père Goliot, and Juliot the gendarme were summoned to Paris as witnesses; and Monsieur l'Abbé Dieufoy was thrown into a state of considerable perturbation by being also called to the trial.

The court-martial was not open to the public. The result only was made known. Lepard was degraded and dismissed from the army, and was then handed over to the civil power to be tried for the murder of Captain Zuyler; and that trial I attended. Gaston declined to go near the place. Denise, of course, kept clear of the whole matter, though her interest in it was intense.

Lepard, as he sat in civilian dress between two stalwart gendarmes in the well of the court, was the unpleasing objective of all eyes. He was thinner than when I saw him last, and the hair had been allowed to grow on his face, which was set in a black scowl, like a cast-iron mask.

He sat with folded arms, gazing stolidly in front of him; and as I looked at him the idea grew upon me that the dumb fiend which he had invoked at the first for our frustration had, in course of time, taken complete possession of him, and held him now in thrall, mind, body, and soul. Why he had not long since made away with himself, whenever he saw the game was lost, I could only set down to the fact that the watch had been so rigid that no possible chance had been left to him.

The official procedure, which differed so greatly from that of our English courts, interested me greatly; but the direct conversational methods employed by the judge to the prisoner failed to impress me, more especially since they were productive of no results.

The case against the prisoner was developed rapidly by the Public Prosecutor.

Prudent Vaurel was called, and detailed the conversation between Lepard and Zuyler under the tree in which he had sat watching for Roussel. He described the actual facts of the murder as he saw them, and of his own arrest by Juliot, and his subsequent release on Lepard's assertion that it was Roussel who struck down Zuyler.

The Abbé Dieufoy described his meeting with Lepard, and the latter's confident assertion that Roussel was the murderer.

Louis Vard and old Goliot—the latter in a state of abject limppness at being so far removed from his ordinary round of life—proved the fact of Roussel's presence near the station many miles away from the Château at the very time the tragedy was enacting.

The Court had accorded the prisoner counsel; but it might have saved itself the trouble. Prisoner took no notice.

Even when Vaurel dramatically described the actual murder and the self-inflicted wounds of the murderer, and his dabbling himself with his victim's blood, he showed not the slightest interest. I am convinced his brain had given way, or, as

I have said, had surrendered itself into the keeping of the dumb demon.

The end came swift and sudden, while the judge was haranguing him somewhat heatedly with a view to rouse him from his stubborn silence. I was watching Lepard intently. I could not help it. He fascinated me. Suddenly I saw the black face suffuse with blood. Gray-black one moment, the next it was black-red, and the next moment, with his arms still folded, he fell crashing forward against the front of his enclosure and lay still.

The gendarmes, who had come to expect no movement from him, grabbed him convulsively and hauled him up; but his head hung limply on his chest, and his face was dabbled with blood—his own this time; and presently one of them looked up at the startled judge, and said, '*Mon dieu, monsieur, he is dead!*'

And dead he was. At first they could not make out how he died. 'By the visitation of God' was the favourite theory, though why such merciful visitation should have been vouchsafed to so great a scoundrel just when most he needed it seemed hard to reconcile with one's elementary ideas of justice.

But the doctors soon put another and simpler aspect on the matter. He was a bull-necked man, with a predisposition to apoplexy. Wedged tight in his throat they found a plug of black cloth torn from the lining of his coat, which he had evidently kept in his mouth with this end in view, and had swallowed when he considered it time to go.

It had choked him as effectually as a garrotte. The convulsion had burst a blood-vessel in the brain, and he died as he had intended.

The Court broke up in confusion, and we all streamed out wondering, and then by degrees the truth was made known to us.

In due course Vaurel received his one hundred thousand francs. He asked me rather shamefacedly if we thought he ought to take them, seeing that Monsieur Gaston would take nothing of all they wanted to give him. But Denise satisfied him that the cases were quite different, and none knew better than I how thoroughly well he deserved his reward. So, without more compunction, he took it, and went back home to Cour-des-Comptes a wealthy man.

He insisted on showing Louis Vard and Père Goliot something of Paris before they returned to Brittany; and in four days he had reduced the old man to a state of crazy bewilderment at the many strange and wonderful sights he had seen, while Louis Vard had finally made up his mind that he had so far been wasting his life in Cour-des-Comptes, and that the only place in the world for an enterprising young man was Paris.

When he returned temporarily to Brittany he carried with him my promise to hand Jeanne Thibaud the marriage portion which I had promised her that night in my room at her mother's

house, on condition that the marriage took place within a month of that day.

For the best of reasons I could not fulfil my promise of dancing with mademoiselle at her wedding; but we promised to be there in any event, and Louis departed in a state of eager anticipation to arrange matters quietly with Madame Thibaud and to hurry on the happy day.

We went to the station to see our friends off, and Vaurel insisted on taking all three down first-class. For Boulot, handsomely arrayed in a new brass collar bristling with blunt spikes, and looking horribly ferocious, sat between his master's legs in spite of official regulations, and grinned superciliously at the functionaries who intimated from time to time that his proper place was in the dog-box forward.

A fortnight later we followed: Denise, Gaston, and L. We journeyed by easy stages, stopping one night at Rennes, where black-browed Marie of the Hôtel Jullien smilingly taxed me with leaving an unpaid bill and certain articles of luggage, both of which impeachments were true, but I had never once given either a thought since last I was there. When I explained to her the reasons for my oversight, and she learned that the gentleman with me was the Colonel Gaston des Comptes about whom the whole world was ringing, and that his sister was my wife, she permitted me to pay up arrears, and for the sake of my 'beautiful eyes' and my 'winsome leddie' took me into favour again.

When we reached Cour-des-Comptes next day the whole village, headed by Boulot and Vaurel

and Louis Vard, met us at the station, and would, I think, have dragged the carriage all the way to the Château, but that we feared for the springs, and preferred the less trying traction of the fat old horses.

Père Bonnatt was there too from Combours, for I had written to him begging him to come over and assist at the wedding, and the good-humour and jollity of his face were in themselves sufficient to ensure a right jovial time.

He stayed with us at the Château, and proved a very pleasant addition to our party. I can see again the merry twinkle of his black eyes as he was introduced by me to Denise.

'Yes,' he said, 'this is the young lady I meant. I see you met her at the station that day all right. I was afraid you had taken advantage of my indiscreet remark when I learned of her disappearance a week later.'

'How did the Duchesse take it?' asked Denise; 'and poor Sister Cécile?'

'Ah, Sister Cécile! I believe she did have a succession of rather bad quarters of an hour. In fact, I am not sure that she has entirely finished with them yet.'

'Oh, that is too bad!' cried Denise. 'Can we do nothing for her?'

'Why, yes! Send her a present in money, which she will immediately hand over to the Duchesse, who will at once admit her to favour again, and peace and happiness will reign in the dovecot once more.'

'It shall be done at once,' said Denise. 'Poor Sister Cécile!'

## OPTICIANS AND THEIR TRADE.

**T**HE optical trade is probably one of the most conservative industries in the world; and, while nearly every other class of trader has kept well abreast with the times, the optician, for some inscrutable reason, is not only content to follow in the footsteps of his forefathers, but glories in his exclusiveness.

The secrets of the trade have hitherto been fairly well kept; and many of the particulars we have obtained from a competent authority are therefore the more interesting.

In the first place, there is the oft-debated question as to the why and wherefore of the superiority of 'pebbles' or quartz over ordinary glass for spectacles. It will probably surprise most of our readers to learn that there is no superiority whatsoever. The pebble myth is one that has been gently but persistently nurtured by the optician for scores of years, the object being, of course, the extra profit. A pair of pebble lenses costs the retailer from one shilling and sixpence to two shillings and sixpence; and

the selling price ranges for a pair of steel-framed spectacles or *pince-nez* glazed with this material, from five shillings to one and a half guineas according to the location and conscience of the vendor. A pair of lenses moulded from ordinary glass is, on the other hand, supplied by the wholesaler at one penny or twopenny; and even the most exalted Bond Street optician would hesitate before demanding for them when mounted in steel frames more than fifteen shillings. The same article may, on the other hand, be vended in a less aristocratic neighbourhood at as low a figure as one shilling.

This brings us to the question of the divergence in prices of spectacles. The uninitiated may think that a pair of spectacles sold in Bond Street or Piccadilly for fifteen shillings must possess immeasurably superior optical properties to a pair bought at a suburban jeweller's for, say, one shilling. Nothing of the kind. The only probable difference is in the workmanship and strength of the steel frame; and, granted that the adjustment to sight in each case is

correct, one pair is, for visual purposes, quite equal to the other.

It must not, however, be inferred from the foregoing observations that we recommend our visually defective readers, whose sight has not been properly tested, to fly for their glasses to the cheapest spectacle-vendor. It is a fact, however, that, granted that a would-be wearer of artificial aids to vision is suited with proper prescription, it matters not, for ultimate results, whether he pays a shilling or five guineas for his 'specs.'

All the ordinary lenses for long or short sight are stocked by the retail optician, and numbered, just as a 'ready-made' bootmaker keeps on his shelves the various sizes of boots and shoes. On the other hand, there are many abnormalities of vision requiring lenses ground to special 'curves.' In these instances the order and prescription have to be transmitted by the retail optician to the glass-grinder, of whom there are perhaps not more than half-a-dozen in the whole of London. The methods of spectacle lens-grinding by these few firms hardly differ in principle, or in a single detail; it is obvious, therefore, that one retail optician is as good as another for supplying spectacles, even of special make.

There are only one or two retail opticians in the whole country who grind their own special lenses. These firms make a point of refusing to supply any one unless furnished with a hospital or oculist's prescription—in other words, they decline to test their customers' eyesight. This is diplomatic, for the oculist, always jealous of the slightest poaching upon his preserves, appreciates the attitude of these firms, with the result that they receive more 'prescription work' than all the other London opticians put together.

It is a curious characteristic of some retail opticians that they have from time immemorial, by words expressed or implied, conveyed to cus-

tomers the impression that the instruments stocked by them are of their own manufacture. This may be due to the desire to conceal the fact that at least nine-tenths of the spectacles, opera-glasses, and telescopes sold in this country are of foreign origin. France and Germany absorb nearly the whole of this trade. The Merchandise Marks Act came as a sad blow to the retail optician. He is debarred now from placing his name upon the instruments he sells, and it will be observed that those firms not caring to risk a Board of Trade prosecution are careful to put the words, in minute letters, 'Examined by' in front of their name engraved upon their opera-glasses, &c.

A few years ago the lenses of nearly every opera-glass sold in this country were manufactured abroad. Recently, however, some London firms have devoted themselves to this class of work; but the prices are far in excess of those of the best French and German make, and these, indeed, leave very little to be desired.

There are one or two departments only in optics where we hold our own with the foreigner. In the construction of microscopes, photographic lenses, and astronomical telescopes our own manufacturing opticians are not to be excelled, and scarcely equalled. In all these instruments superlative care and nicety of adjustment, together with perfection of finish, are a *sine quâ non*, and here our own manufacturers hold the palm.

It is a remarkable fact that, although the value of raw optical glass ground into photographic, telescope, and microscope lenses runs into many thousands of pounds per annum, its manufacture in this country has always remained in the hands of a firm of lighthouse lens manufacturers in Birmingham, who, it is well known, have made a gigantic fortune out of this branch of their business alone.

## STEPHEN WHITLEGE'S REVENGE.

### IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

**T**WELVE years had passed since that memorable afternoon when the heir of the ancient house of Carlsbridge engaged in such heroic battle for his Queen. Twelve years form no inconsiderable portion of a human lifetime, and it is quite possible for such a period to make vital changes in that seemingly unchangeable thing, a Wiltshire village. Lord Carlsbridge was still alive, but he was more of a recluse than ever. Old Squire Donningford was dead, and had been succeeded by his son, a gentleman of a saving turn of mind, who gave up the kennels, sold his father's shorthorns, and closed the path through the blackthorn copse at

the foot of the Downs—which last act was sufficient to ruin him in the eyes of the village for ever and a day. At the Vicarage there was a small yet perceptible change. The vicar was older and grayer than of yore, more given to dozing before his study fire than he had once been, and more prone to leave the conduct of the parish to the long-legged, cadaverous curate, who had his own theories, and fell foul of his vicar in consequence on every possible occasion. The most important change in that household, however, was to be found in the vicar's daughter, Mildred. Twelve years before, on a certain memorable occasion, as already described, we met her as a girl of twelve. She had doubled that age now,



and the added years had produced a tall, handsome woman, who was, at one and the same time, the hope and the despair of the youths for miles around. If offers of marriage count for anything, then the last six years had been busy ones for her. She was a universal favourite, and was as welcome in Lady Carlsbridge's drawing-room as in the cottage parlour of the humblest old woman in the village. Each was certain that she would marry, and each felt equally convinced that the man who won her hand might consider himself fortunate above his fellows. But who would that man be? There was young Squire Todthorpe, who astonished the neighbourhood by forsaking his usual pursuits and attending church on five consecutive Sundays, a thing he was never known to have done before. His conduct, however, was explained when one wet Sunday night he waited for her at the church door, proposed before he reached the lich-gate, and when he discovered that his suit was hopeless, went home to his dogs and badgers, vowing that happiness had gone out of life for him for ever. Then there was the Reverend Algernon Snowfield, the curate aforesaid, whose bride had been the Church until he had looked into Mildred's gray eyes. After a period of hesitation, to which he dared not give the name of courtship, he put his fate to the touch, and was rejected in consequence. To the names of these two unfortunate gentlemen might be added those of the doctor's assistant; the organist; the head-master of the village school, who loved from afar, and trembled when he spoke to her; and last, but not least, Stephen Whitledge the younger, now a tall and stalwart man. Stephen's wooing, however, differed from that of the others inasmuch as there was no humility connected with it. On his father's death he had succeeded to the mill, and in consequence was now one of the magnates of the village. He had the reputation of being a hard man to cross, and it was stated that when he set his mind upon doing or having a thing he was usually successful in accomplishing or obtaining it. Earlier in his career he had made up his mind that he would remain a bachelor, being of the opinion that a wife would in some measure prevent him from so speedily garnering that wealth upon which he had so inordinately set his heart. In consequence he engaged a village crone as housekeeper, and banished the fair sex from his heart, as he thought, for ever. But there came a time, as happens in the lives of most men, when he found that it was not good to live alone. In other words, Mildred Garret had returned from a somewhat lengthy visit to London, and he realised that she was not the same Mildred he had known as a boy, but a vastly superior person, even worthy of being the helpmate of a miller in a sound way of business. But he was not going to do anything in a hurry. He resolved to take three months to think it over; then, if at the

end of that time he found himself still of the same opinion, he would take the bull by the horns and make her his wife without further ado. In pursuance of this plan he indulged in dreams of the future. Mildred, so he settled it, would of course understand that she was an extremely lucky girl. In return for his condescension she would make his home pleasant and comfortable to him. He would do the mill-house up a bit; he would even revive the vanished glory of the drawing-room; Mildred should be a power in the parish, and perhaps, if she pleased him, his generosity might run as far as a pony-carriage—which, by the way, he would take as a set-off against a bad debt. Surely human ambition could require no more.

With that hard-headedness characteristic of him, he gave the matter due consideration for three months, and at the end of that period, finding that he was still in favour of the proposal, made up his mind to put the question to the girl herself without further loss of time. Eventually he decided upon the Sunday evening following as being the most suitable. He would wait for her after service, and have it all settled and done with before supper-time should arrive.

The Sunday evening at length came round, and, for perhaps the first time in his life, Stephen Whitledge bestowed careful attention upon the question of what he should wear. He had a dim notion that maids attach some importance to a man's personal appearance, and, like a prudent business man, he resolved to run no risks. When all was finished to his satisfaction, he left the mill, crossed the bridge, and made his way down the little village street towards the church. It was not often that he attended the evening service, so that when he entered the building and passed up the aisle to his own pew, and folk noticed his brave apparel, a stare of astonishment ran through the church. It was known that Stephen did nothing without good and sufficient cause; in that case, what could his reason be now? Presently Mildred entered the building and passed into the pew on the left-hand side of the aisle, exactly opposite that occupied by the miller. She was wearing the new gray dress her aunt in London had given her, and looked surpassingly sweet. Stephen glanced at her out of the corner of his eye, and as he did so a vague fear, occasioned by he knew not what, took possession of him. He watched the pretty head bowed in prayer, the light from the oil lamp above, meanwhile, shining upon her brown tresses. He noticed the smallness of the gray-gloved hands, and the two links of a gold chain-bracelet that peeped from beneath her sleeve. Mildred, when he thought of her in his own house, was one person; Mildred dressed like this was quite another. The service had not yet commenced, and while he waited his thoughts went back to the time when Mildred and he had played to-

gether. A flush mantled his face as he thought of that day when he and Victor Benfield had fought on the Down, and his teeth clenched and his face set hard as the recollection of what he had seen on the Lovers' Seat occurred to him. God help the man who should dare to come between himself and Mildred now! Then the vicar entered and the service commenced. During the sermon, which was an eminently scholarly one, and miles above the heads of the congregation, the miller amused himself preparing for what was to take place afterwards. He scarcely knew how to frame his declaration. Being aware of his own vast superiority in the matter of wealth, he had no desire to cheapen himself; at the same time he was anxious to avoid frightening Mildred by alluding to the responsibilities she would incur as his wife. The trouble of it all was, that he was convinced that on such occasions girls require love-speeches and other 'twaddle' of that kind. Now, he himself was about as sensible a man as ever stepped, and about as capable of making love as he was of standing on his head in the village street. Still, if such a thing were absolutely necessary, he had no doubt that he could pass through the ordeal as satisfactorily as any other man. He wished now, however, that he had read up a few books upon the subject. Novels, he had heard, were full of love-talk, and perhaps he might have been able to get by heart something applicable to his own case. On one thing, however, he was quite determined: he would eschew poetry. Nothing under the sun should induce him to drop into that. He despised poets as much as he did Frenchmen, and was wont to describe both as 'sickly twuds' (toads). He, Stephen Whitledge, was a man, and was resolved to behave as one.

The service at an end, he carefully brushed his hat, prolonging the operation until he had seen Mildred leave her pew and cross the church towards the side-door; then he set off in pursuit.

It was a beautiful evening, and though just upon eight o'clock, still quite light. The rooks were cawing drowsily in the elms beyond the Vicarage garden, and in the distance could be heard the splashing of his own mill-wheel as if to encourage him in his endeavour.

'Good-evening, Miss Mildred,' he said, raising his hat as he spoke with more than usual politeness. 'We'm in for a spell of fine weather, I'm thinking.'

A moment later he could have bitten his tongue off for allowing himself to drop into dialect. To make matters worse, he corrected himself, and the smile he saw upon Mildred's face told him that she had noticed the slip.

'Yes, I think the weather does look a little more settled,' she replied, looking round the sky. Then as they moved towards the gate opening into the Vicarage garden, she added, 'Are you coming in to see papa?'

Not being prepared to begin quite so soon, Stephen allowed the opportunity to pass him, and weakly said that such was his intention. He held the gate open for her, and they passed in together.

'I suppose you enjoyed yourself in London,' he said, choosing his words carefully, lest by any chance he might let fall a provincialism again. 'Perhaps you would like to live in London always?'

He had an idea that by saying this he would induce her to commit herself to a statement that life in her own village must of necessity be preferable to existence elsewhere. Let her do that, he argued, and he thought he saw his way.

'But I wasn't in London,' she answered. 'My aunt lives in the suburbs. Twickenham is really almost like the country.'

Stephen's London geography was somewhat crude; but, on the strength of having paid three or four business visits there, he had the reputation in the village of knowing the City intimately. For this reason he was not going to admit his ignorance of Twickenham. He saw, however, that it was hopeless to attempt to reach the lady's heart by way of the great Metropolis.

'Well, 'tis certain that we are all very pleased to see you at home again,' he said graciously. 'You will think of settling down now, I suppose?'

'I suppose so,' she said, with what was almost a sigh. 'It will be fearfully dull, however.'

This did not look hopeful for what he had to say; nevertheless he was resolved to persevere.

'Now I come to think of it,' he began, as if an idea had just occurred to him, 'I think I have heard you say that the old mill is a nice, homely—picturesque, I mean—sort of place; ivy all over the front, you know, and the red brick and white windows. I mind your—I mean I remember—your telling Squire Trowbridge's lady that it would make a pretty water-colour sketch.'

'I am quite sure it would,' she answered, wondering to what all this was leading. 'We are all agreed that it is the prettiest house in the village.'

Stephen smiled approval. Things seemed to be shaping themselves satisfactorily after all.

'I am glad to hear you say that,' he answered cheerily, 'because it's about the old mill-house I've come to talk to you.'

'To talk with me?' she repeated. 'What on earth have I to do with the mill-house?'

'I want you to come and look after it for me,' he answered. 'I always used to say I shouldn't marry; but there, the fact is I've changed my mind now. It's all along of your going to London. If you hadn't gone it 'ud never come into my head. But there, the long and the short of it is that—well—if you feel like getting married, I'm willing to do the same. I've set by a tidy bit of money, and'—



Mildred gave a little cry of surprise and consternation. In her wildest dreams the probability of a proposal from Stephen Whitledge had never occurred to her. She knew that the man was in earnest, however; and, from her knowledge of his character, she was aware that he was not to be trifled with. She had received offers of marriage before, but never one that promised such difficulties as this.

'You don't know what a lucky girl you be,' Stephen continued doggedly, dropping back into dialect now that the point was settled. Then, feeling that he was giving himself away too cheaply, he changed his tone. 'I don't say but what I might have married money,' he went on. 'There's Widow Bell now, over at Green's Farm yonder, would be glad of the chance.'

He paused to see the effect of his words.

'I am very glad to hear that,' Mildred replied, clutching frantically at the straw held out to her. 'Please do not lose any time in proposing to her. I couldn't marry you—really, I couldn't.'

'What?' cried Stephen in amazement. 'What's that you say? Not marry me—me, the miller with ten thousand pounds at the bank! You can't play with me, mind that!'

'I am not playing with you,' the girl replied, with some asperity. 'I am only saying that I cannot marry you.'

Stephen's eyes began to glisten with angry fire. He was not accustomed to being thwarted, and he had looked upon the matter as settled.

'You're going to be my wife, so let there be no more talk about it,' he said stolidly. 'I know what I want, and nobody ever crosses me.'

'I will not be your wife,' she answered; 'and if you are going to talk like that you had better go away.'

At that moment the sound of voices beyond the hedge reached them. Mildred uttered a little cry as she listened. Then the gate opened, and the vicar, accompanied by a tall, handsome man, entered the garden and stood before them.

'Mildred dear, I have a great surprise to announce to you,' said the vicar. 'Captain Benfield has returned from India, and seeing me in the churchyard, asked that he might accompany me to pay his respects to you.'

'Have you forgotten me, Mildred?' inquired the new-comer, stepping forward and holding out his hand. 'I assure you I have not forgotten my old playfellow.'

Mildred tried to speak, but for a moment her voice failed her. Then she stammered out, 'No; of course I have not forgotten you.'

She looked up at the tanned face before her, adorned with a fierce moustache, and could scarcely believe that this was the same individual who had danced with her three times at the famous ball at Carlsbridge Park five years before. But since then he had been with his regiment in India and in the Soudan. In those days he was

only a subaltern, newly joined; now he was a captain, and, if report spoke the truth, on the threshold of a fine military career.

'This is a delightful surprise,' said the vicar for the second time. 'But, dear me! I am forgetting my manners. You remember Mr Whitledge—do you not?'

'Of course I remember him,' Victor answered, stepping forward and holding out his hand. 'How do you do, Stephen? It seems only yesterday that we were boys together. Like myself, you have changed a great deal since then.'

Stephen said something in reply, and then they adjourned to the house. The miller's heart was beating within him. His suit had been rejected, and by a girl he could have broken between his finger and thumb. He, Stephen Whitledge, the rich miller, the man whose word was as law to some eighteen or twenty people, to receive such a rebuff from a starveling parson's daughter! It was too much! It was unheard of! He would have shaken the dust of the place off his feet at that moment but for the fact that the vicar asked him to accompany him to his study for a few minutes in order that he might consult him on a matter connected with the welfare of the parish. The welfare of the parish, forsooth!—when his own happiness had been spoilt for ever. As it happened, the interview lasted somewhat longer than was expected, and when the pair left the vicar's sanctum for the drawing-room it was discovered that the other couple were not in the house.

'It is so warm inside,' said the clergyman; 'perhaps they have passed into the garden. Shall we follow them?'

After some little search the others were discovered on the lawn near the gate. The Captain's arm was resting on the back of the seat behind Mildred, and Stephen was irresistibly reminded of a picture that had been presented to him on that memorable day when Victor had thrashed him for speaking disrespectfully of the Queen. The thought was gall and wormwood to him, and without more ado he bade the vicar a hasty good-night and left the garden.

Four weeks later the engagement of Captain the Honourable Victor Horatio Benfield to Mildred Garret, only daughter of the Reverend George Garret, was duly announced. Those who were privileged to know spoke of it as an attachment that had existed for many years, and even Lady Carlsbridge, who had entertained more ambitious views for her beloved son, knowing Mildred's worth, could not but signify her approval of the match. To Stephen Whitledge the news came as a thunder-clap. His overwhelming self-conceit had prevented him from imagining that Mildred could prefer another to himself. Such a thing seemed incomprehensible; but it did not prevent him from hating his more successful rival with a passion that enveloped his



whole being. He brooded over it by day, and dreamt of it by night, until it exercised an influence on his whole life; yet so silently did the fire burn within that no one had any idea of the crisis through which he was passing.

One day, a week or so after the publication of the news, Victor was riding through the village on his way to the Vicarage, when he spied the miller crossing the road in front of him. On reaching him, he pulled up and leant forward in his saddle to shake hands.

'I haven't seen anything of you lately,' he said. 'By the way, Stephen, you haven't congratulated me on my engagement.'

Stephen looked at him with unflinching eyes.

'No, I don't know as I have,' he answered. 'It didn't strike me as you'd care about it. When big folks marry, they might think it impudence of smaller folk bothering about what isn't their concern.'

'What nonsense!' said Victor, with a laugh. 'Besides, you are no end of a swell in this place, they tell me: churchwarden and all that sort of thing. You'll be wanting to get married yourself before very long.'

Stephen gathered from this that Mildred had said nothing to her lover about his own proposal. He was glad of that.

'Married,' he said scornfully; 'you'll see me in the lunatic asylum first.'

'That's the way you look at it,' said Victor cheerily. 'Well, well, every man has a right to his own opinion, I suppose. But that isn't what I wanted to say. I am going to shoot over Green's Farm on Thursday. I should be very glad if you would accompany me—that is, if you care about it. They tell me there are plenty of birds this year. What do you say?'

'I can't come,' said Stephen ungraciously. 'I've got my business to look after. A man who wants to get on can't go running about the country-side with a gun in his hand, that's certain.'

'I'm sorry you can't see your way,' Victor replied, resolved not to be put out by the other's rudeness. 'However, you'll perhaps be able to manage a day later on. Good-day.'

'Good-day,' said Stephen, and continued his walk towards the mill, while Victor rode on to the Vicarage.

'Poor old Stephen,' he said to himself as he jogged along; 'he laughs at marriage—does he? What he wants is a sweet girl like Mildred to love him and bring him to a proper way of thinking.'

Though he did not know it, that was exactly what Stephen *did* want.

## A R A R I T Y A T T H E Z O O .

By F. E. BEDDARD, M.A., F.R.S.



TWO small creatures have just taken up their quarters at the Zoological Gardens for the first time in the long period of seventy-four years which have elapsed since the opening of the Gardens. Madagascar produces many strange and anomalous beasts, but none to which these epithets apply more stringently than to the subject of the following remarks.

The tenrec, tondrac, or tanrec, as the animal is variously named in the vernacular, is a small creature of the hedgehog kind, and is one of the most characteristic animals inhabiting the great island of Madagascar. That island is infested with mammals which occur nowhere else, and mammals, moreover, that ought, so to speak, to have effaced themselves from creation long since. It is a bit of the old world which was sent adrift from Africa epochs ago, carrying with it as in an ark examples of the creatures which then probably populated the world generally. No obvious kind of African beast can now be found in the forests or among the marshes of Madagascar. Neither the rhinoceros nor the elephant has ever set foot there; we find no monkeys, lions, or leopards. The hippopotamus tried living there for a little while; but it soon decayed, and left merely some bones in a marsh or two.

These insectivora, as the group which contains our tenrec is called, are a race of small insect-feeding creatures which present many archaic features in their architecture. Possibly they owe their existence as a relic of the past to their smallness and unaggressiveness, to a nocturnal habit, to a general shrinking from the observation of larger and stronger quadrupeds and hawks, and also to the fact that they largely feed upon the ubiquitous and abundant earthworm. With these positive advantages, it is not remarkable that they have been able to hold their own. It is a singular fact that so many insectivores are more or less spiny, which is in its way a protection at least from prowling carnivora of moderate size; but whether this is so or not, the tenrec appears to have a better method of circumventing its foes. It has, at the most, stiff hair, which hardly reaches the dignity of spines. However, it is abundantly clear that the tenrec's forebears had a hedgehog-like coat, since the young tenrec at birth and for some time after has three lines of spines down its back, which ultimately drop off and are replaced by simple hairs. The tenrec has adopted as a permanency a state of spinelessness which is only known as an exceptional condition in the hedgehog; spineless and merely hairy

examples of that well-known animal having from time to time been met with in nature and recorded.

The tenrec is about the size of a cat, and looks like a largish hairy hedgehog. It has a long and inquisitive snout, and a tail so abbreviated as not to be apparent when the animal is in the flesh; and it walks in an ancient way upon the soles of its feet. 'They grunt,' said Buffon, 'and wallow in the mire like hogs.' This description would appear to be a presumed necessary corollary from the supposed hoggish nature of the beast; but, like its relative the hedgehog, it has not the faintest resemblance to the 'unclean beast,' except indeed that, according to the not over-particular native, its flesh is appetising. The method of walking with a foot firmly set on the ground, firm even to splayness, was in early times the fashion among all beasts; the raising of the heel and the digital mode of progression is a later invention of nature. The sharp and few cusped teeth of this little animal is also a relic of past ages, during which the elaborately-cusped

and complicated molars of later animals were unknown.

Though insignificant enough in appearance, the tenrec's persistence is highly significant of the usefulness of a dwarfish stature. Roughly speaking, no large creature can hold its own for a very long time. It is too expensive a matter to keep up a huge body where there are many rivals. The tenrec cannot be said to owe anything to intellect. Many animals have increased and multiplied by reason of their well-folded brains. The group to which the tenrec belongs have quite smooth brains. If, therefore, it had entered into competition—say, with the clever cat—the tenrec and its kindred generally would have been swept away long ago by sheer force of mind. Grubbing in a humble way for earthworms, varied by an occasional banquet off carrion, has proved in the end a more satisfactory course for the tenrec. An extraordinary fact about this creature is that it is extremely prolific, the female tenrec producing as many as twenty-one young ones at a birth.

## THE DIAMONDS.

By R. RAMSAY.

I.



MAISIE was watching her aunt's departure.

The horse had been harnessed all in a hurry, and a strap hung unbuckled as it plunged and started.

Above the wheels Lady Mary sat, clutching the telegram, her wizened face peering under a bonnet that was awry. There had been an accident of some kind to Sandy.

Invariably on the day after the county ball Lady Mary carried her diamonds in to the bank, and left them till the day came round, or till there was another great entertainment. Two lone women and a few servants could hardly keep safe the jewels that were—with her pedigree—almost all the inheritance of the last Earl's daughter. It was fine to see her thin figure glitter in them, annihilating the new and rich; but she endured many terrors while they were beneath her ill-guarded roof. Yet the horse's head was turned away from the town road this morning, towards the junction across the moors; the mistress must catch the south train to Sandy—Sandy, who was the son of her dead sister, and a scamp.

Maisie saw her aunt off, and turned back to the house, its lonely mistress; and there she was confronted by a pair of excited maids. They had found three hard black cases under Lady Mary's pillow. For the first time in all her life, Lady Mary had forgotten the diamonds.

Now, the county ball was always followed by a

servants' ball the day after. Lady Mary took a pride in sending as many retainers as possible, to match the array from bigger but less ancient houses. It was a point of honour with her as much as her own appearance.

'Do you think my lady would wish us to stay away?' the butler had said reluctantly, and Maisie had said she thought not. That was why silence and a comparative loneliness fell with the evening all about the house.

Maisie flung down the book at which she had been vainly staring, and played a waltz; then she rang for lights, and there was no answer. She made her way towards the servants' quarters, venturing down the long passage softly, and pausing at last to laugh.

There was the cook—stout, red-faced, and middle-aged—twirling slowly about the kitchen in a solitary waltz; and there was the butler's underling writing poetry, with heart-broken intensity, at the table. He looked up and sighed, and the cook sighed also; and then they jumped, catching sight of Maisie.

'It's that wicked old Andrew, Miss Maisie, ma'am,' said the cook, full of her wrongs. 'Him—at his age!—off to the ball with the rest of them, and John and me left alone!' Then she heaved another lamentable sigh.

Maisie was a thing of impulse; their forlorn looks appealed to her comic and tragic side.

'It's too bad,' she said; 'but I don't want either of you, Sarah. Get ready and go after them.'

Sarah was not an old servant, like the heartless Andrew, whose chief joy was in flaunting the glories of his 'family.' She jumped at the offer with only a faint protest:

'But, Miss Maisie, you couldn't be left alone.'

'I'll bar the doors,' said Maisie.

For a little while she amused herself with the half-guilty alacrity of the two, and their struggles to harness the only animal in the stable. She saw them depart, and imagined the high wrath of Andrew, and how Lady Mary would gasp at the bare idea of her being left alone. It was a rash kind-heartedness on her part; but Maisie was amused, and did not yet repent.

It was curious how silent the house became because of the simple knowledge that she was alone in it. It was lucky she was not afraid of ghosts. She fastened all the bars she could find or manipulate, and then went wandering up the stairs. All the shutters were closed; only in Lady Mary's room one had slipped from the bar and was hanging, clanking. Maisie put down her candle and reached out of the window to pull it shut.

It was a fine night. The moon was driving restlessly through the clouds and stars were

wretch with a grim sense of duty and none of the picturesque?—and had cried after him in despair: 'You deserve to be haunted for ever by the gray ghost of the waterfall!'

The American had answered quietly, straightforwardly, glancing up with a queer hint of meaning from the unlucky waters to the girl defending them—Maisie was tall and slight like a reed, with an eager face in a ring of sun-golden hair:

'Miss Maisie, I shall be haunted.'

That was why Maisie was angry and reddened and caught her breath.

She fastened the shutter all in a hurry, and by way of distraction peered inside one of the hard black cases that had been thrust again under Lady Mary's pillow. The diamonds were irresistible, with their glitter of hidden stars; and Maisie was fascinated. She lifted them up and tried them audaciously on her bosom and in her hair. Half their charm had been that she only saw them in rare glimpses, and she imagined Lady Mary's shudder with a wilful laugh, lifting them up in her careless hands. Sandy had asked why his aunt did not sell them, since she lived narrowly on her income and had to pinch; but it was only Sandy who could say it and be for-

It was rumoured that the man at the had grown gray with the care of them year after year.

Maisie had lit the candles at the mirror; she held her face near it, gazing wistfully, and then started a little, amazed at the way she sparkled. It were she indeed! At first she stared at herself in a rapture, and then she sighed.

What was that?

Across the utter silence came a strange, muffled sound. Maisie shrank back and listened. Who would be asking for admittance at this ominous hour of night?

There was a pause in which she heard her heart beat faster and faster, in terrified expectation; and then it began again, loud and startling. Was it? And why? She must go down to ask.

Reaching up the candle from the dressing-room, she ventured to descend the stair. It cost her all her courage; she had not guessed when what it meant to be alone—all alone—in the darkness, and in a deserted house.

The knocking had ceased when she reached the door, but there was a strange sound of fumbling behind the window hidden away behind, the one little window where the shutter-bar was not firm. She remembered with dismay how the thing swung as she tried to make it secure. The diamonds were still glittering in her hair; in her hand she had not the wit to strip them off and hide them. Desperately she started forward.

Where lonely women in towns keep a man's name hanging to scare intruders, Lady Mary had a portrait hung threateningly across the hat-stand, and there was a tradition that it was loaded.

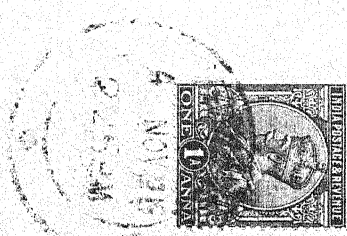
Suchie

Maisie's Port Wine

Postmark

Alchabad

St. P.



strength in argument—an! who could convince a! and there was a tradition that it was loaded.



Maisie clutched at it—if the thief were only half as afraid of the thing as she!—and, thus armed, approached the window.

'Who's there?' she called, and breathlessly put her finger on the trigger.

'Miss Maisie?'

She let the gun fall.

'I must come in. Don't be alarmed; but it's important,' said the voice. 'Never mind the door; perhaps better not unbar it.' Then, like a thief, Mr Fidler made his way in at the window.

'If I'd shot you!' cried Maisie, horror-stricken. The American smiled as he took the ancient weapon out of her hands, and examined it in the light of the candle that was flickering wildly near.

'It won't help us much,' he said; and then, with an odd formality in his manner, 'I must apologise for intruding; but—your aunt's diamonds didn't go to the bank?'

'N—no,' answered Maisie.

'And you're almost alone?'

'I am alone,' she said, staring at him.

'Thought so,' said Mr Fidler. 'Wait till I fix up that window.'

'I don't understand,' said Maisie, half in terror, half struggling to be haughty. Mr Fidler did not turn; she could only watch his back and the black head bent at the window.

'Well,' he said, 'it's thieves. I—I was taking a last look round, and it just happened that I was standing there in the glen, reckoning up how many thousand horse-power there is in that water'—there was a spark of mischief in his tone—'and, generally, thinking. The fellows guessed their whispering would be drowned by the noise of the waterfall, but when a man's had to live his life in the roar of machinery his ears get sharp. I just stood aside and listened. They've had their eye on Lady Mary's movements; and it's the diamonds! So I slipped away among the firs like a snake, and sent a man I ran across on the way here to fetch help; but it will be an hour before that reaches us—and they're coming along at once.'

He turned then and looked at Maisie. The candle flickered near both their faces as he lifted it.

'Look here,' he said; 'you shut yourself in somewhere, and leave me to run this show.'

'I won't,' said Maisie.

'Please,' he said; and then quickly, 'you've got them on—haven't you?'

She remembered all at once that she was still wearing the diamonds.

'Take them off,' he said quietly. It did not seem to surprise him that she should be masquerading in the precious things that should have been hidden away under lock and key, but he spoke as if she were a careless child. 'I'll take charge of them for the present. They will be safer in my pockets.'

Maisie was dumb. A terrible doubt assailed her and darkened her trust in him. After all, he was a stranger. How did she know? For an instant she felt that she would far, far rather have seen a real burglar, a ruffianly villain whom there could be no mistaking. A man like that might kill her, but—but could not break her heart.

He watched her, a strange little figure, with the diamonds sparkling like fire and stars, her face wan and young and terrified in the glitter.

'Why,' he said, with a queer, short laugh—had he read the fear in her eyes?—'I believe you think I'm a thief!'

Maisie looked him right in the face; then she put the diamonds in his hands.

## II.



HERE was no sound without, surely?

Yet what was that creeping, creeping?

Was it nothing but restless leaves?

Maisie, standing at the bottom of the stairs, came involuntarily closer to Mr Fidler and laid her hand on his arm.

'Is it?'—she whispered.

He did not answer directly; he was listening. When he did speak it was with a cheerful irrelevance.

'Are there any tea-trays?'

'What?' asked Maisie.

'I'm not particular,' said Mr Fidler. 'Anything you can bang will do.'

Maisie led the way to the kitchen, where they could arm themselves with brass trays and anything else resounding.

'Now, what we have to do,' Mr Fidler said quietly, 'is to wait till they are close up, and then scare them out of their lives. It will gain time.'

Then they waited.

Slowly the sounds, that were hardly sounds, came nearer; the night seemed to be intense with an unaccountable restlessness, as if there were a fear in the rustle of every leaf.

'Cover the light,' said Mr Fidler; 'they might see it through the shutters.'

Maisie hid it behind the stair, and came back to him, her eyes large with expectation. They could just distinguish each other's faces.

'I'll give the word,' he whispered.

Maisie shuddered. Alone she would never venture to break the hush fraught with expectation—with such a threat. If she had been alone still she would surely have died!

'Oh!' she gasped. Then she felt his fingers close over hers.

What was that narrow gleam of light in the darkness? It did not come from within.

'Now!'

Then the night was made hideous by a sudden appalling clamour.

The girl's strained ears could catch nothing in that terrible brazen clang. Mechanically she beat the brass pans around her, kneeling among them, gazing with dilated eyes up at him. Her hands ached; she caught up something and hammered with it upon the rest. It was like a nightmare.

Mr Fidler was standing opposite, solemnly banging two large brass trays against each other till the roof rang again. He looked across at her and smiled. Must they go on for ever? She tried to ask, but her voice was inaudible in the din, and he could not see her parted lips in the eerie light that glimmered so strangely among the brass.

At last he paused. Maisie imitated him, letting her hands fall and shuddering in the utter silence. He was listening. A minute passed—another, and then another.

'I'm afraid,' he said 'that the trays are dented.'

He had meant to make her laugh, and she had to, although her ears were ringing and her eyes wild with fear; it gave her courage to ask what was faltering on her lips.

'Are they gone?' she said.

'Well,' said Mr Fidler thoughtfully, 'I guess they are making up their minds about the brass band a few hundred yards away. If they think it's the devil—excuse me—they will run farther.'

'And if not?' breathed Maisie.

Mr Fidler smiled at her in a calm, unexcited manner.

'Then it won't last,' he said.

'You mean?'—faltered Maisie.

'I mean when a man's scared they say the blood leaves his heart and makes him an awful coward; and then, I expect, it rushes back in a hurry and makes him reckless. It's hard to beat a man who's been thoroughly frightened and got over it. That's why some soldiers fight like fiends. Anyway, we've gained time.'

There was a little pause; they listened, with their eyes on each other. Then the American turned to Maisie; she had not heard a sound.

'Oblige me,' he said. 'Take those things back to the pantry and—stay there. It has a good lock, and patent bars on the window. I shall be much more comfortable if you will.'

'Am I to shut myself in and try to go to sleep?' said Maisie, her eyes dark with scorn. It thrilled above the fear in her voice, vanquishing it for a while.

'Just that,' he said.

'I won't,' she declared, looking at him defiantly, all the while her heart beating fast in terror.

'Ah! but you must,' said the American pleadingly. He had taken up the ancient gun with which Maisie had tried to withstand him when he arrived, and was examining it with a kind of hopeless amusement. 'Don't think I'm in any danger,' he said. 'If they turn up I shall threaten them and talk big. How are they to know I'm not a squad of police? If they get a

glimpse of *this* they'll take to their heels at once.' He looked up suddenly from the gun, and his eyes were earnest. 'Miss Maisie, I'm a lucky man. I was telling myself I'd never see you again. I was telling myself I'd never have a chance to serve you—I who would give my life for the opportunity. So, you see, I'm happy. Won't you go away?'

The girl's heart gave a little leap; but *she* could not fight: it would only hamper him to have her at his side; and—and—he was talking as if it were a simple fact, needing no comment, that he loved her, and she knew it, and did not care. That was strangely betrayed in his tone, and in the smile with which he was putting it all aside.

'I'll go,' said Maisie, a queer gaiety hiding the little shake in her voice. 'I'll go up, and lean over the stair, and watch!'

He smiled again; this time the smile was hurried.

'Go,' he said. 'Right up to the roof, and look out like Sister Anne'—

*Crack!*

The light wavered suddenly in the vibrating air, and then Mr Fidler staggered and fell backwards among the brass pans with a muffled clang. Then he lay still.

Maisie's cry rang above the jarring noise of his fall:

'They've killed him! Oh, they've killed him!'

And there was nothing that could matter much after that.

The men, thrusting their way in past the broken shutters, glanced without pity at the figures on the floor. It had been a lucky shot, thanks to the crack under the shutter. Had it hit them both? The men were not curious; in their trade there is small leisure for a curiosity that is idle. The house was at their mercy; its two defenders, a man and a girl, were both unconscious. That was all they cared about. Time was short.

'Bring that,' said one shortly, turning back at the stair-foot and indicating the light, shining dimly where Maisie had placed it a little while ago. The man who had shot Mr Fidler paused, put down his revolver, and caught up the light, sheltering it with his other hand from the draught of the shattered window. Then they all disappeared up the stair.

Maisie had never fainted before; it was only a minute's blank. She felt the life returning, and was in darkness.

It was all strange and silent. Only, far away in the upper parts of the house there was a sound of walking—weird, muffled, like the horrible wandering of ghosts. Maisie's head was resting against something that was very still; her arm was flung round it as she had fallen.

'They've killed him!' she moaned. 'They've killed him! Oh God! Oh God!'—

Then she felt the quick beat of a pulse underneath her cheek in the darkness, and a hand moved strangely, softly, across her hair.

'Maisie!'

That was how they found each other.

'It was falling among the brass band that stunned me,' he said. 'I'm only shot in the ankle.'

Maisie could only sob.

'I'm all right, only'— He paused anxiously, listening to the distant searching, and then he spoke again, in a hurried whisper: 'Take the diamonds out of my pocket and run, straight through the wood. You'll meet the men coming; and it's the only way'—

'Leave you?'

Mr Fidler peered round the deserted hall. The moon had burst an instant through the clouds that were hiding it, and glimmered in at the shattered window. It lit things in the darkness fitfully, with a capricious gleam; and he saw the revolver lying where the light had been. He struggled up and tried to walk towards it, but failed.

'Will you reach me that?' he asked.

Maisie lifted it, shuddering.

'Thanks. Six chambers, and I had the first. Maisie, Maisie, take the things and run'—

'I will not,' she said. He leaned against the wall, white with pain, in the darkness; and yet he smiled.

'The diamonds!'—

'The diamonds!' repeated Maisie, with an utter disdain that was great in a woman. 'Why, if they can't find them—if they are gone—they will—murder you!'

'Hush!' he whispered; his hand on her arm was urging her towards the window. 'I think I will sit up and pepper them as they come down the stairs.'

Maisie started, with a dreadful vision of what might happen.

'I'll run,' she gasped.

Her hand tightened in his and then let go. It would mean saving him, if she could reach the tardy rescuers in time. Ah! she could run for that. Now the thieves were inside, the way was perhaps unguarded. Only, if she came back too late? There was no other chance, unless—

'Give me the diamonds,' she said hurriedly.

There was something strange in her tone. The American, who had himself proposed it, drew back his hand; then, finding her fingers eagerly fumbling at his pockets, he caught them and held them fast. He smiled down on her tenderly, triumphantly, in the imminent peril they both were in.

'No,' he said. 'I understand. You've no right to take them and give them up as a peace-offering to the thieves. They belong to your aunt. Would she like it?'

Then Maisie went.

She dared not unfasten the door. Treading with a desperate lightness, she reached the window and thrust herself through as the burglars had done, falling on to the grass. In another minute she was a wild running shadow among the trees.

Had she been running all her life in a breathless night? Or was it an awful dream? Flying in moonlight and blackness alike, careless of anything that might hurt or stay, Maisie strained her eyes to catch sight of the dark human figures that started up in her road at last.

'Quick!' she cried. 'Quick!'

They stared at the apparition, grasping its significance as she dragged at them to make them hurry. There were several men, gathered from distant farms, and a few were riding. A man lifted Maisie up to his saddle, and she felt the horse leap beneath her. Ah! would they be in time?

As they reached the house they heard a pistol-shot, then another.

Maisie shut her hands over her ears. She saw nothing but a strange glimmer of lights and darkness, and the lights were flashes, terrible and brief. The men rushed past her. There was a struggle now, a fierce fight, and then—capture. She watched it in a terrified search for the one face among them all.

At last she saw him, and sprang to his side as he staggered. He had been resting on one foot, leaning against the wall.

'They've only hit me twice,' he said, and laughed.

Lady Mary returned in the morning. It had been a hoax about Sandy—a ruse perhaps—and strange intelligence buzzed in her ears all the way. She rushed at Maisie, and her first shriek was for the diamonds.

'Mr Fidler stole them, I think,' said Maisie. 'I don't know if they are still in his pocket'—her face, that had been wan with excitement and fear and watching, had no longer a want of colour—'and—and—he has stolen me.'

#### CHRISTMAS.

Rejoice! for Christmas Eve is here once more,  
With all its charm of mirth and Eastern lore.  
Although you see no star not seen before,  
Nor laden Magi wending by your door;  
Although two thousand years have almost passed  
Since in the fields, that dim and distant night,  
The shepherds saw the herald-angel bright,  
And mystic music heard from heights downcast:  
Pile up the fire, spread forth the festal board,  
Dig out the roadway from the drifted snow,  
And bring in holly, bay, and mistletoe,  
That we may keep the birthday of our Lord.

Rejoice! I trust Joy, Peace, and Love will be  
Among the guests who share the feast with thee.

SARAH WILSON.





# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### WITTY RETORTS OF POLITICIANS.

By E. J. MOYLE.

**T**HE impromptu reply,' said Molière, 'is precisely the touchstone of the man of wit.'

If we except the Irish members of Parliament, who belong to a race always noted for their quickness of retort, and one or two English politicians who can always be relied upon to hold their own, our modern legislators are not, as a body, particularly blessed in the power of repartee. The gift of momentarily turning the tables on an aggravating interrupter is possessed only by a few. This is to be regretted, for even the palate of a hostile audience is invariably tickled with a smart reply, whether it take the form of an ill-natured sting or a good-tempered joke, and very frequently a threatening meeting is transformed thereby into a tolerant one. In bygone days the method of election lent itself admirably to a free display of banter. The candidate upon the hustings on nomination day was invariably assailed with embarrassing questions, and his ultimate success or failure depended in no small measure upon his ability to hurl back a stinging retort to a carefully-considered interrogation.

The Prime-Ministers of this century have been singularly gifted in the art of repartee. Even those unable to boast of having had their wits sharpened by warmly-contested elections have known how to strike home when the occasion presented itself. Take, for example, the courteous yet crushing reply of the Duke of Wellington to the Austrian princess who asked him how he accounted for the fact that the Viennese spoke French far better than did the English. 'Madam,' said his Grace, 'if Napoleon had twice visited London with his armies, as he has Vienna, we should doubtless be much more familiar with the French language.' More stinging was the same statesman's retort when Louis-Philippe introduced to the Duke one of the French Marshals he had defeated in the Peninsula, and who, with a lack of manners strangely foreign to his nation, partly

turned his back on his old enemy during the presentation. The king apologised for his officer's rudeness. 'Forgive him, sire,' exclaimed the Iron Duke, with a laugh. 'Why, it was I who taught him to do that in the Peninsula.'

One would hardly look, perhaps, for an exhibition of this gift of repartee in a person of the temperament of Lord Melbourne; yet the following retort to Mr Black, then editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, shows that the Viscount was not a whit behind his illustrious Tory predecessor in this respect. The Government of which he was the head was daily being severely attacked in the columns of the *Chronicle*, when Lord Melbourne casually met Mr Black in the Strand, and each inquired for the other's health. Mr Black complained that he had been suffering from a bad cold. 'Ah, Mr Black!' said the Premier, 'you have been *lying* on damp sheets.'

It was just about this time—in 1835—that Mr Disraeli, fresh from defeats at High Wycombe, but in no way discouraged, journeyed down to Taunton to oppose Mr Henry Labouchere. This contest, which was destined to become the turning-point in the young politician's career, was made additionally interesting by the attack delivered by the Tory candidate on Mr O'Connell, and which nearly resulted in a duel. Feeling in the little Somerset town ran very high on both sides, and personalities were freely indulged in. While Disraeli was walking along the Parade one day during the contest, fantastically arrayed, and followed by an alternately cheering and jeering crowd, an excited politician rushed from his shop, pointing the finger of scorn at him, and exclaimed reproachfully, 'A Jew! a Jew!' Disraeli was quite equal to the occasion. Turning suddenly round and facing his antagonist, he coolly replied, with a quiet smile, 'No. Behold an Israelite in whom there is no guile.' It was the same statesman who crushed an opponent anxious to know 'on what [programme] he stood,' by retorting, 'I stand on my head, sir.' Later in life,

when the summit of his ambition had been reached, Lord Beaconsfield was constantly pestered by a Yorkshire manufacturer addicted to boasting of his wealth. 'Look at me,' said the bore one day. 'I made myself.' 'Then you took a great responsibility off the shoulders of the Creator,' was the stinging, if not original, retort.

It may not be altogether out of place here to recall the delightfully courteous reply made by Sir William Harcourt while dining one evening with Mr Disraeli. It happened that on the occasion in question Mr Harcourt—as he was then—was placed next to the hostess. On the wall opposite them hung a picture of a lightly-draped female figure, and during a pause in the conversation the guest's eyes happened to wander to the painting. 'I see you are looking at that picture,' suddenly broke in Mrs Disraeli, with a laugh. 'I always say that it oughtn't to be allowed in here; but it is nothing to the Venus that Mr D. has in his bedroom.' 'That I can quite believe,' replied the Squire of Malwood gallantly, with a bow, and feeling that he had ventured on rather delicate ground, quickly changed the subject. Later in the evening the incident was related to the host, who laughed heartily at the neat reply of his political opponent.

To return to the Premiers, we find that Lord Palmerston, in making sarcastic use of the Psalms, had the tables turned on him in a disastrous manner by Bishop Wilberforce. Peer and prelate were staying at a country-house, and when Sunday came 'Pam' offered the Bishop a lift to the neighbouring church. The latter declined, and proceeded on foot, but was overtaken by the rain. When Lord Palmerston passed him in his carriage he mockingly said:

'How blest is he who ne'er consents  
By ill advice to walk!'

to which Wilberforce promptly replied:

'Nor stands in sinners' ways, nor sits  
Where men profanely talk.'

It was not often that Palmerston was thus beaten, for no politician was ever subjected to more rigorous heckling than was the Liberal Premier by his constituents at Tiverton, his great antagonist being a local butcher named Rowcliffe. The ingenious method adopted by 'Pam' under fire is well instanced by the following report of a reply to a question by an opponent whether he would support or oppose a certain measure. 'I will'—(loud Tory cheers)—'not'—(great Liberal applause)—'pledge myself'—(uproar)—'until the details are before me'—(general cheering).

A very different line, but not less effective, was that adopted by Mr Gladstone when he contested Newark at the request of the Duke of Newcastle, the registered owner of the borough. A matter-of-fact elector asked the young candidate whether he was or was not the Duke of Newcastle's nominee? This was an exceedingly embarrassing question. If

the candidate said 'No,' he would be convicted, within every man's knowledge, of a falsehood. If he said 'Yes,' nomination and poll were both a farce. Mr Gladstone rose to the occasion, and extricated himself from the difficulty by asking the honourable elector to do him the favour of defining the term 'nominee.' The unwary elector fell into the trap, and Mr Gladstone was, of course, able to declare that in such a sense he was *not* the duke's nominee.

At the celebrated election in 1865, at which Mr Gladstone lost his seat for Oxford University, his opponent was Mr Gathorne Hardy. In those days the practice was for each elector to record his vote by word of mouth before the tellers for each party. The late Professor Henry Smith was acting as teller for Mr Gladstone, when an uncouth country clergyman entered, and to the usual request for whom he wished to record his vote, replied in his confusion, 'I vote for Mr Glad—I mean for 'Ardy.' 'I claim that vote,' quietly put in Professor Smith. 'No, no,' protested the clergyman; 'I did not finish the name.' 'Quite so; but you did not even begin the other,' retorted the professor. The rejoinder of the youthful Harrow politician concerning the Liberal statesman deserves mention. The scene was at Lord's cricket-ground, and Eton had just received defeat at the hands of their rivals. Harrovians were naturally elated, and cheered vigorously. This annoyed an Etonian, who sarcastically remarked to a partisan of the victors, 'Well, you Harrow fellows needn't be so beastly cocky. When you wanted a headmaster you had to come to Eton to get one.' For a moment the Harrovian was nonplussed; but, pulling himself together, he blurted out, 'Well, at any rate, no one can say that *we* ever produced a Gladstone.'

Leaving the greater political lights and coming to the rank and file, many instances can be cited in which a candidate has been able to use to great advantage his power of repartee. The late Sir Henry Havelock, while addressing a boisterous meeting of his constituents in the south-east division of Durham, met with a hostile reception, one elector expressing his disapproval by throwing a rotten egg at the candidate. Fortunately it missed the speaker, and was smashed on the wall at his back. There was a momentary pause; then Sir Henry said in his brusque way, 'I say, my friend, the hen that laid that egg must have had very bad breath.' The effect of this good-tempered rejoinder was electrical; the meeting cheered the candidate for some moments, and gave him a respectful hearing during the remainder of his speech. Less fortunate in the matter of aim, but quite as happy in retort, was Charles Burleigh the Abolitionist, who in the midst of an anti-slavery speech was struck full in the face by a rotten egg. 'There's a proof,' he said as he calmly wiped his face with his handkerchief—'a proof of what I have always

maintained, that pro-slavery arguments are very *unsound*.' The crowd laughed heartily, and Burleigh was allowed to speak without further molestation. A similar incident occurred at a political meeting in the west of England, but on this occasion it was a cabbage which found its way to the platform. The orator retorted that some of his flattering supporters had declared him to be a powerful speaker, but he little thought that any of his hearers would ever lose their heads over him. Coleridge once dealt in a crushing manner with a hissing audience. 'Gentlemen,' said he, 'you hiss, and I am not surprised at it. What can you expect when the cold waters of reason come into contact with red-hot fanaticism but a hiss?'

A candidate for a rural constituency who appeared very nervous was requested by an elector at the back of the room to speak up. 'Speak up!' he retorted in a voice which filled the building and surprised all present. 'I should have thought that the ears of the gentleman who interrupted were long enough to hear me even at that distance.' Not less telling was the reply of Wilberforce at the St James's Hall to a similar request. 'Speak up!' he said. 'Yes, I intend to speak up, for I refuse to speak down to the level of the ill-mannered person who interrupted me.'

A repartee which has been fastened on a number of youthful candidates—amongst others the Marquis of Carmarthen when he, then twenty-five years of age, first contested Brixton; Mr Ivor Guest, on being introduced by Sir Edward Clarke to the electors of Plymouth; and Mr Winston Churchill at Oldham—is one in reply to the idiotic question, 'Does your mother know you're out?' the inference being that the candidate is too young for the high honour he is seeking. The retort is in every case the same: 'Yes, sir; and what is more, when the poll is declared my mother will know that I am in.' Speaking of Mr Winston Churchill, now a member of Parliament, his definition of a candidate deserves to live: 'A man who is asked to stand, wants to sit, and is expected to lie.' Mr Bennet Burleigh, the famous war correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*—a paper with which he has been so long and honourably connected—was in 1885 Radical candidate for the Govan division of Lanarkshire. He was subjected to much heckling, but he more than held his own, to the great delight of his supporters. At a meeting of the workers in the shipyard of the late Sir William Pearce, the Conservative candidate, one of the men, a Liberal, wanted to know why Mr Burleigh, if he were an honest Radical, wrote for the *Daily Telegraph*. 'Just for the same reason,' replied Burleigh, 'as you, another honest Radical, work in the yard of a Conservative shipbuilder.' The heckler collapsed, amidst roars of laughter.

During an election contest in the West End of London, a candidate was greeted with the

remark, 'What have *you* done for the constituency?' It so happened that the gentleman questioned was a lawyer who had—in the fullness of his heart and, his opponents averred, with one eye on the forthcoming election—made it his practice to give gratuitous advice daily to constituents in legal difficulties. Before the candidate had time to reply, the meeting was surprised by a working-man rising in the body of the hall and exclaiming, 'What has Mr — done for us? Why, for one thing, he has brought me and my old woman here together again—ain't he, Sarah?' With this the grateful elector bent down and gave his forgiving spouse, who was seated beside him, a kiss which resounded throughout the building. The incident caused roars of laughter and much cheering, and was probably unique in the annals of electioneering. When 'Charlie' Russell, the late Lord Chief-Justice, was contesting South Hackney, a constituent, in the course of his canvass, asked Sir Charles what the penalty was for bigamy. 'Two mothers-in-law,' retorted the famous lawyer. In a recent contest a speaker was much annoyed by the interruption caused by two crying infants who had been brought to the meeting by their parents. The orator bore it patiently for a little while, but at length stopped in his address and said, 'There are some things in this hall like good resolutions—they *should be carried out*.' This witty remark had the desired effect, and the causes of the disturbance were removed.

It must not be imagined that the victory always rests with the speaker, for very frequently the politician comes to grief at the hands of the electors, and when this is the case no situation can be more galling. Quite recently, at a Conservative meeting, a gentleman who had been invited by the local executive to lay his views before the electors, with the prospect of becoming the adopted candidate, declared, in vindication of his devotion to truth, that when a boy he had been thrashed by a mistaken father for telling it. It was an ill-mannered opponent who, having somehow crept into the meeting, briskly replied, 'I reckon it cured yer, guv'nor.' At a Primrose League gathering at Newton Abbot, in Devon, a 'working-man orator' advocated the desirability of paying a good price for everything. 'Cheap labour is no good; cheap tools are no good; cheap watches are no good. You can take it from me,' he continued, 'that a safe and sure motto is, "What is cheap is no good." If you think you will forget it, write it down and stick the paper in your hat.' A man at the back of the hall inquired how much it cost to join the local Habitation of the League. The imported orator asked the chairman, who mentioned the sum, which turned out to be a few pence. 'What is cheap is no good; if you think you will forget it, write it down and stick the paper in your hat,' mercilessly retorted the Radical interrupter. A candidate for an agricultural constituency, while



canvassing, fared little better. Noticing one of the electors ploughing, he approached him and said, 'That seems to be very light soil. What crops do you grow on it?' 'Depends very much on the kind o' seeds we puts in,' replied Agricola dryly.

On the other hand, a vote is frequently secured by the happiness of a retort. At one of the houses at which a candidate called he was encountered by a bullying opponent, who declared with vehemence, 'I would sooner vote for the devil himself than for you.' 'I have not the slightest doubt of it, my dear sir,' said the candidate quietly; 'but in the event of your friend not coming forward, may I count on your vote?' No vote was ever more smartly earned or thoroughly deserved. A resourceful, though it is to be feared mercenary, politician in humble circumstances put money in his pocket at an election by a witty reply. He tried, unsuccessfully, to sell a number of kittens bedecked with Tory colours. The next day the same animals appeared adorned with Liberal favours. 'Why,' said some one, 'they were Tories yesterday.' 'Yes,' he said, 'but their eyes have opened now, and they have become Liberals.' The vendor's wit enabled him to dispose of his feline wares.

It is from individuals possessing similar gifts that emanate those telling retorts which one continually hears in a crowd. At an open-air political meeting in the north of England a man cried, 'Hurrah for Jackson!' to which a bystander replied sarcastically, 'Hurrah for a Jackass!' 'All right, my friend,' exclaimed the first speaker, 'you can hurrah for your candidate, and I'll do the same for mine.' All electors are not so gifted, as the following experience of a canvasser in Devonshire clearly indicates. 'Whom are you voting for, my good fellow?' he asked. 'I votes for the lady.' 'But there is no lady candidate standing.' 'Well,' replied Hodge, 'Poll Early's name comes on my voting-paper before the names of the two men, and I thought I'd vote for her—see?'

Before taking leave of this subject of witty retorts, it would be unfair to close without including a few specimens of repartee culled from the electoral contests of our brethren across the sea. In a New Zealand town one of the candidates, a pronounced Scotsman, had received a

present of a huge thistle, which at the moment happened to be lying on the table of his committee-room. A friend, suddenly entering, at once withdrew, with the remark, 'I beg your pardon! I didn't know you were at lunch.' This indirect reference to the animal usually associated with thistle-eating recalls a witty speech made by the Hon. Joseph Choate before he received his appointment as Ambassador to the Court of St James. While still an active politician on the Republican side, he was on one occasion following Mr Richard Croker round the country on the stump, and thus dealt with the Tammany chief's address: 'Croker's speech,' said Mr Choate, 'reminds one of the familiar story of Balaam's ass. Until the ass spoke nobody in the world imagined what a perfect ass he was. If he had not spoken he would have passed into history as an average, ordinary, silent ass who carried Balaam on his way; but when he spoke he was distinguished over all other asses in the land.' Far less acrimonious was the same gentleman's happy remark when, during an after-dinner speech, he glanced up at a gallery filled with ladies, and exclaimed, 'Now I understand what the Scripture phrase means, "Thou makest man a little lower than the angels."' Senator Hoare, of the American Congress, is one of the wittiest as well as one of the most learned men in public life. Not long ago he was joined in the corridor of the Capitol by a former colleague in the Senate, and as they neared the entrance to the chamber Mr Hoare motioned his companion to pass in first. 'After you,' said the ex-senator, drawing back. 'No, indeed,' retorted Senator Hoare; 'the X's always go before the wise.'

Instances might be multiplied in which brilliant repartees have been exchanged on the spur of the moment; many doubtless will recur to the reader as these lines are glanced through. It is impossible to tell, in many cases, who is the actual author of the retort quoted, for politicians are, in the language of one of them, proverbially 'indebted to their memory for their wit.' However obtained, it is to be hoped that courteous retorts will ever be part and parcel of political gatherings, the monotony of which they do so much to enliven.

## OUR LADY OF DELIVERANCE.

### CHAPTER XXIX.—THE END OF THE BEGINNING.



OUR own wedding had been of the hastiest. We made up for it in the enjoyment of the wedding of our two good friends Jeanne Thibaud and Louis Vard, and Denise entered into it with all the exuberance of enjoyment which most girls find greater vent for in other people's wed-

dings than in their own. In my lack of understanding, I had suggested that the merrymakings should take place at the Château, and I supposed that the proposal would be considered a flattering one to our friends. But Denise, who knew her people, negated it at once.

'It wouldn't do for a moment,' she said; 'they wouldn't enjoy themselves the least little bit.'

They would try to be on their good behaviour, and all the fun would be gone. There is only one place to dance in at a Breton wedding, and that's in a barn; and we'll have the biggest barn up at La Garaye, and you shall see them dance till they can't stand. Oh! it's a great time is a wedding, I assure you—unless you have it on a ship,' she added mischievously, 'and have to be married in somebody's clothes—which is not exactly the very pleasantest kind of a wedding, I know.'

'Yes,' I said, 'I felt very sorry for you. Next time you shall have it in a barn.'

The following day almost the whole village streamed away over to Bessancy, and Jeanne and Louis were duly married in the church there, Père Bonnatt helping to tie the knot tight.

Vaurel was there quite *un grand seigneur* in the new clothes which he had bought at Paris at the sign of 'Old England.' And old man Goliot was there in the new clothes which Vaurel had bought for him at the same place. He was still in a state of great excitement over his Parisian experiences, and found it difficult to settle down to the humdrum life of Cour-des-Comptes; but Vaurel was looking after him.

And Boulot was there in his new brass collar with the blunt spikes, and a big white cotton bow tied on the back of his neck to counteract in some degree the militant look of the collar, and to bring him into line with the festivity of the occasion.

His sheepishly knowing look as he sat on his stump in the church porch, with his head hanging forward between his shoulders and the big cotton bow cocking up behind, set us all laughing, and he wrinkled up his nose at us and sneezed furiously three times, and then rolled desperately on his back, kicking and wriggling vigorously in a vain attempt to get rid of his decoration. Then he got up and sat down again despondently, and said as plainly as words, 'I just did that to show that I didn't put that silly thing on myself. It was that dear old fool Prudent who tied it on. You must excuse him; he's been a little bit off his head since I took him round the world and up to Paris. But he'll come round all right in time if you leave him alone. He's the best-hearted fellow in the world, you know; but he's a bit raised just now. However, I'm looking after him, so you don't need to worry yourselves.'

During the ceremony we heard a loud sneeze which was very familiar to us, and there was Boulot, tired of waiting outside, coming sauntering up the aisle. He looked round on us all with extreme deliberation, winked as his eye caught mine, wagged his stump at sight of Louis and Jeanne kneeling by the railings, then smiled knowingly, and sat down alongside

them, surveying the proceedings with all the grace of a heavy uncle, and sneezing again at the incense, of which he disapproved.

The chorister-boy who was waving the censer was a little rascal, and gave him a special whiff all to himself, which started him sneezing more violently than ever. The two priests looked at him. Father Bonnatt's eyes twinkled merrily, and he leered benevolently back at them, just as the heavy uncle might have done had he been slightly uplifted with the hilarity of the occasion. A verger in a cloak hurried up, carrying a long wand. Boulot sneezed and smiled, and I could almost hear him say:

'Well, old cock, what part of the show are you, and how much longer is all this nonsense going to last? Say, tell that little boy in the long shirt that if he throws any more of that stinking stuff at me I'll come through and bite a piece out of his leg. Some folks may like it, but—a-ti-shoo!—a-ti-shoo!—a-ti-shoo!—it gets up my nose and makes me sneeze. Want a word with me, do you, old boy? All right; what is it?' and he took a heavy step or two towards the verger, smiling with his eye-teeth all the time, and the verger as soon as he saw him in motion thought better of it, and beat a rapid retreat down the aisle.

However, the ceremony was got through all right, and Boulot led us all back to Cour-des-Comptes in triumph, Denise and Jeanne in the family carriage, and the rest of us on foot. Such a gay company of broad-brimmed beavers and handsomely smocked blouses, and snowy flapping headgear, and swinging short blue skirts and neat ankles, and seamed and weather-tanned old faces, and young faces like rosy apples, and joyous voices that called to and fro, and shrieked with laughter at infinitesimal jokes.

And so along the dappled high-road, with the poplars waving and shimmering on each side of it, and through the green fields to the big barn at La Garaye, where the long trestle tables were groaning beneath the weight of a mighty feast.

Here Denise bade them all wait while she went inside to see that everything was right; and they gathered round Louis and Jeanne, joking and chaffing them to their hearts' content with a humour as broad as it was homely; and if, now and again, their sallies brought the colour into the bride's cheeks, it was all part of the fun of the day, and only what you have to expect when you get married in Cour-des-Comptes.

Then Denise pushed open the great swinging doors, and they all flocked in out of the spring sunshine, and rushed for the tables like so many children, exclaiming aloud at the quality and quantity of the fare.

Jeanne and Louis occupied the places of honour of course, and on the table in front

of Jeanne was a plate covered by another plate upside down.

She removed the top plate to make way for something better, and then gave a little startled cry, which turned all her neighbours' faces towards her, while Denise's eyes sparkled like jewels.

'What is it, then? What is it?' asked those who could not see.

And Jeanne, in an awe-struck whisper, murmured, '*Mille francs!*'

Then Louis turned over the notes one by one, counted them aloud up to ten, and announced in a proud voice, 'Ten thousand francs!' and a hum of amazement ran round the tables, and broke into exclamation—'Thousand thunders!' 'Heavens!' '*Dieu-de-dieu!*' and many more.

'The luck has come to Cour-des-Comptes,' cried one, 'and we'll all be *rentiers* soon.'

'Now we've got Monsieur Gaston and ma'm'selle back,' said another.

And Jeanne, recovering from her surprise, remembered all about it, and leaning forward with swimming eyes, nodded her grateful thanks to me.

Those at the farther ends of the tables came crowding round to look at more money than most of them had ever seen at one time in their lives, and then went back to their places buzzing excitedly, so that they had no appetite until they began; and then they all made wondrous play on the good things in front of them, till it seemed to me that they could not possibly dance, for some hours to come at all events.

But as soon as they were all satisfied, the tables were struck, all except one at the far end of the barn, on to which three chairs were hoisted, and three great mugs of cider; and three important gentlemen seated themselves in the chairs, and began torturing their fiddles into tune. And all the company joined hands in two long lines that ran from end to end of the barn, and then, having arrived at an understanding among themselves, the fiddles dashed headlong into a racketing country dance, and the wavering lines of stiff blue blouses, snowy starched headgear, swirling skirts, and laughing faces swept together and then retreated, back and forth, any steps you like and the more the merrier, back and forth, stamp and kick, shout the tune, clasp your partner or anybody else's, twirl her round, hands again, back and forth, laugh and shout, forget yesterday, never mind to-morrow, you're dancing at Jeanne Thibaud's wedding, and the business of life at the moment is to dance and laugh and shout, and be as merry as you may.

'Ten thousand francs! *Nom de dieu!* ten thousand francs!'

'Well, she's a fine girl is Jeanne, and Louis is *bon garçon*—so we'll dance all night to show them what we think of them.'

'Bravo, bravo, M. le Curé! It's monsieur has an eye for a pretty girl yet. In the olden time, Jeanne'—

'Ah, foolish! those times are gone. *A bas les aristocrats!* Now we are men and we have our rights.'

'Dance, *cochon*, dance!—faster, or thy clumsy hoofs will block the way.'

'*Tiens!* Mademoiselle is not dancing.'

'Simpleton! Of course not. Don't you understand'—

Denise sat in the corner by the fiddlers' table, and laughed and clapped and cheered us all to greater and greater exertions, till the blue blouses lost their stiffness, and the white headgear flapped limply round red, hot, panting faces, and some dropped out, and the chopines of cider began to circulate, and some danced on as though their legs were made of steel, and sang the louder to make up for the rest. Among these, Vaurel and Louis Vard—Vaurel with his armless sleeve broken loose and flapping wildly, except when his partner on that side grasped it merrily in lieu of a hand, his sunny face and big blue eyes all on fire, his voice pealing out like a jerky trumpet, every little bit of him dancing for all he was worth; and Louis Vard keeping up with him to the very last kick, because he wasn't going to be beaten at his own wedding by any man alive, much less by a man with only one arm, even though he had been round the world.

Boulot lay on the edge of Denise's skirt, with his head on his paws, and viewed the proceedings with the contemptuous toleration of a philosopher, whose creed it was to rest awhile after a good dinner. Whenever his master whirled into his neighbourhood he wrinkled up his brows as who would say, 'That's mine—that one with the flapping sleeve. He's not really crazy, you know. He's the best fellow in the world, but he's a bit excited just now. He'll be all right to-morrow. I'm keeping an eye on him.'

Old Father Goliot attracted much attention by insisting on showing his untravelled friends how they danced in Paris, his attempts at imitation of the antics of the *Moulin Rouge* being received with shouts of laughter; and how his stiff old joints would feel about it next day I did not dare to think.

Père Bonnatt won all their hearts by footing it with the best of them. He too was of the soil, and his youth came back as he danced.

I caught Denise's eyes following Gaston with a great glad light in them, and when they fell on mine they fairly snapped with our common enjoyment. For it did our hearts good to see him dancing away among the rest, with all the abandon of a child among his own people, the past forgotten, and with never a thought for the future.

They talk still of Jeanne Thibaud's wedding



down at Cour-des-Comptes, and still marvel at the ten thousand francs she found in her plate.

'That was something like a wedding present—don't you know? I'd get married twice a week on those terms!'

'Ah, *mon beau!* it is not every day one meets an Englishman with so open a hand, and there is only one *ma'm'selle*.'

'It is true! There is only one *ma'm'selle*.'

That is how they keep our memory green at Cour-des-Comptes.

They danced till dusk, and then they lighted candles, and danced on far into the night. But when the gloaming fell we others stole away, and strolled slowly through the darkening woods to the Château.

And as Gaston and Père Bonnatt walked on in front, Denise, my wife, hung more heavily on my arm, the sweetest burden in the world.

'Tired, dearest?' I asked.

'Just a little tired, but very, very happy,' she said.

And the whole world held no more grateful man than I.

We live in Britain and in Brittany, Denise and I, and on the waters round about. And the freedom of the seas gives us a glorious pleasure-ground; from Iceland and the fiords to the softer beauties of the Mediterranean, they are all ours, and we draw fresh stores of life and endless enjoyment from them.

I bought the *Clutha*. There were so many pleasant memories attached to her that I did not care that she should go into alien hands. And Andrew Lyle is still content to be her captain and our very good friend.

Up on the Clyde there is a broad-spread, one-storied house built of red sandstone, with deep

verandas, nestling among the trees almost opposite the Cloch, which knows us at times in the early summer, when the air is sweet and bracing, and the hills are flushing with the heather. But the autumn finds us among the greens and golds and the fiery reds and lovely russet-browns of Cour-des-Comptes, among our own people, in our other home.

And once and again there comes upon me the recollection of that blood-curdling night, when crazy Roussel got into the house, and struck panic into the stout heart of Prudent Vaurel and valiant Boulot and myself. And the door of the little room at the end of the passage discomforts me at times, with the remembrance of the dumb bedevilment that once lay behind it.

And then the great hall rings with the patter of tiny feet, and merry peals of childish laughter scatter the ghosts of the past; and Boulot bursts into the room to greet his old friends, while his new ones hang on to him by tail and collar—the tail that still looks like a rusty iron spike, the collar he wore at Jeanne Thibaud's wedding. And behind him comes his master, beaming welcome from every hair of his sunny face, and stands before my wife, and says again in a voice of loving reverence, '*Ma'm'selle!*' just exactly as he did the day when first I made her acquaintance in front of his little stone house by the river.

For to her own people, who love her so dearly, she will always be *ma'm'selle*, though she live to be one hundred and ten, as our good friend Prudent would say; and to me, who love her most dearly of all, though our journey should run beyond the allotted span, travelling hand in hand and heart to heart—to me too she will always be *ma'm'selle*, and she will never be more than twenty years old.

THE END.

## ABOUT SOME OF OUR LATEST CONTRIBUTORS.



IN two recent occasions the subject of former contributors was discussed in these pages under the headings of 'Notable Beginners in *Chambers's Journal*' (1895) and 'Some Early Contributors to *Chambers's Journal*' (1897). With some assistance from the authors themselves, we are here enabled to make an excursion into the regions of the present and the future. The initial suggestion is due to a correspondent and occasional contributor, who proposed an article 'in the last number of the year; the article to be called the "Geography of *Chambers's Journal*," showing whence have come the year's articles and stories that have passed through your threshing-machine into the *Journal*.' This suggestion has been broadened in its scope, so as to compass a few biographical details; for

it is even truer to-day than in Addison's time 'that a reader seldom peruses a book with pleasure till he knows whether the writer of it is a black or a fair man, of a mild or choleric disposition, married or a bachelor, with other particulars of a like nature.' It is mainly with the 'other particulars' of a literary kind we have concerned ourselves; and these, it is to be hoped, will possess at least freshness and reliability.

According to one of the ablest of the young publishers of to-day, no paper will take with the masses which consists mainly of essays or leaders. 'They want things served up with other interesting matter, and with as much of the personal element as it is possible to give them. The masses still incline entirely to the lighter side of literature.' This was exactly the view of Charles Dickens also. Those who have gratified this instinct

in a clever and taking way have found themselves on the high-road to fortune; but this kind of thing may be overdone, and it may be possible to have a higher ideal, and try to lead the masses some steps upwards. The newspaper has trenched on the province of the magazine, and the magazine has too frequently become a thing of shreds and patches, an illuminated scrap-book for an idle hour, without much intellectual sediment or stimulus. The conductors of this *Journal* have aimed, and still aim, at a little more than this, and are glad to acknowledge the assistance of a large body of contributors from every part of the habitable globe. Sir William Turner in his British Association address said there was no hereditary aristocracy in science, the army of workers being recruited from all classes. So is the army of writers; and therefore it has been possible to maintain the original standard of furnishing rational and recreative literature, with much positive information.

What was said by the conductors at the beginning of the second volume in 1833 is, we trust, as true to-day, that 'all has been plain, downright substantial matter, generally based upon the broadest human interests, and depending for its effect solely upon its own merits. Though sensible, moreover, that we might have extended our circulation very much, especially out of Scotland, by the introduction of pictorial embellishments, we have stood steadfast upon letterpress alone, addressing our readers through their understandings rather than their senses, and thereby making certainly a far less direct appeal to the mass of the public than is made by the only respectable work which exceeds us now in circulation.' This last is a reference to the *Penny Magazine*, which was illustrated, and ceased in 1845. The fresh competitors that—over sixty years later—now appeal by means of illustrations to the senses are legion.

It is the 'coming writers' we wish to lay hold of here, for such men and women as Mr George Manville Fenn, Mr William Le Queux, Mr Guy Boothby, Mr Louis Becke, and Mrs L. T. Meade are familiar acquaintances to the reading public. There are always in the background an army of meritorious writers, who have not been advertised by themselves or by anybody else, but whose sterling qualities help to form the backbone of many literary enterprises. *Chambers*, by its method of gleaning from a wide field, and because it has never been the slave of any clique or coterie, has been able to present a great variety of fare, which its readers have ever been ready to recognise and acknowledge. There is a period at which the professional writer becomes hackneyed, and repeats himself under various tricks of style; by drawing from a wide constituency, as has always been done for these pages, freshness and variety can alone be maintained.

Mr John Oxenham, author of *Rising Fortunes*,

*Three Times I Married Mary*, and also of our last serial, 'Our Lady of Deliverance,' is good enough to say that he finds peculiar pleasure in the thought that *Chambers* likes his work, for one of the pleasantest reminiscences of his boyhood was in lying on the hearthrug before the fire and revelling in 'Lost Sir Massingberd,' 'Lady Flavia,' and other good company in its pages, when he certainly had not the remotest idea of ever contributing to them. Mr Oxenham is best left to speak for himself. He dates at present from Greenock. In answer to the question how he had 'drifted' into literature, he says:

'Why "drifted"? Is that the final result of your observation of the writing fraternity? It gave me a twinge to read the word. May not a man deliberately climb out of the whirlpool of business into the fresher and very much cleaner and more inspiring rock of letters? I spent many years in the rapids and the whirlpool; then I climbed out—or began to—and so began to live. I do not altogether regret the wasted years; they are useful to look back upon. I regret, however, that I did not begin my climb sooner.

'Since you ask it: I began to write for my own pleasure and as a distraction from other matters. The delight of it grew upon me, "as the appetite comes in eating." I have no tale of hardships, since I was not writing for a living. What I enjoyed producing other folks seemed to enjoy perusing, and were even willing to pay for. Eventually I took my courage in both hands, and climbed out of the mud of business life on to clean rock. If I have not climbed high, I have at all events climbed clean; and, all being well, I intend to climb higher. I think the story running in *Chambers* was distinctly the strongest thing I had done up to that time; but I have done stronger since.

'I am north-country, but the wrong side of the Border. All the same, my pleasantest associations are with the west coast, and I used to tramp it with a knapsack from Dunoon to Fort-William with an enjoyment that is still fresh to me. Then I spent some years in Brittany; lived even in the small stone house above the weir overlooking the Château—though it is not called Cour-des-Comptes; and my host was Prudent Vaurel, and though the latter name is not his, the personality is. I can hear his great roaring laugh at this moment as he threatens Boulot with the water. I had the chance of seeing a good deal of the Continent, from Stockholm down to Genoa, and fairly well all that lies between, and footed it to and fro in Switzerland both in summer and in winter, which is far better. Then business matters took me to America and Canada for a couple of years. I name all this simply because I consider this, all unwittingly, was as good training as I could possibly have had. Since then I was many years in London; and the roar of Fleet Street and the Strand is still in my ears. It is

more tuneful—say, rather less inharmonious—at a distance than when one is in it.

‘This is a longer screed than I intended. You must blame the pen, a good old boon and blessing Waverley.’

The general reader must have noticed the name of Charles Edwardes in many of the magazines and over against some popular travel volumes; but he can have no conception of the multitude of other anonymous contributions of this busy writer, who when he is not afoot in England or America, or astride his cycle on the Continent, dates from St Mark’s Place, Wolverhampton. He is one of the few topographical writers who can make his descriptive articles thoroughly interesting and readable from first to last, while conveying much information, and the fresh impressions of a traveller. ‘A Ride to Crécy’ and ‘The Diary of a Busaco Monk’ are recent cases in point. Amongst his short stories contributed to *Chambers* is ‘The Silver Joss.’ He is to be envied for the constant variety that comes into his life, and the ability wherewith he makes others share his pleasure and profit; and yet he says, ‘What have I done that the public should feel any particular interest in myself?’ We are able to condemn him, if not out of his own mouth, at least from his own pen, which furnishes this record:

‘As a man of letters, John Morley opened *Macmillan’s Magazine* to me in 1884; and in *Cornhill* under James Payn I wrote about forty short stories and articles. Of my other periodical contributions I can only say that they are computable by the five hundred; that they include essays, descriptive papers, and stories; and that their area extends from the *Nineteenth Century* downwards. For Mr Alfred Harmsworth, whose personal acquaintance I value, I have written and still write much. My books include the volume on *Leopardi* in Trübner’s Philosophical Series in 1882; also travel-books on Crete, the Canary Isles, Sardinia, and Jutland; school stories: “Dr Burleigh’s Boys,” “The New House Master,” and “Jones the Mysterious;” and a disinterred romance, “Shadowed by the Gods.” I am still holding off volume fiction, in the sanguine hope that I may attain wisdom and wit enough for such long enterprises later in life.

‘I might mention the gift made to me by the Archduke Louis of Austria of his colossal work on the Balearics, printed by him for private distribution—these with a note to say he had been charmed by reading some of my papers. I do not care to advertise myself; but this sort of thing does, I fancy, interest the public.’

The work of Mr John Arthur Barry sometimes tempts comparison with that of W. Clark Russell, and sometimes with Bret Harte. But he has an individuality and style all his own. Like Mr F. T. Bullen and Mr Oxenham, he draws from his own varied experience for characters and local colour. When quite a boy he went to sea

as an apprentice in the mercantile marine, left the sea for the Australian gold-diggings, and afterwards settled as a sheep-farmer at the Antipodes. During this time he began to write and publish tales of adventure in Australian papers, and also at home in *Chambers’s Journal*, the *Graphic*, and other periodicals. In 1893 he was in England arranging literary business, which included the issue of a collection of stories entitled *Steve Brown’s Bunyip*. As the English climate does not suit him, he returned to Australia the same season, and was for a year or two at an up-country sheep-station. Finally he settled in Sydney to give literature his undivided attention. Besides his contributions to *Chambers*, stories of his have appeared in *Cornhill*, *The Strand Magazine*, and the *Graphic*. His other publications include such collections of stories as *In the Great Deep* and *Against the Tides of Fate*, and two novels, *The Luck of the Native Born* and *A Son of the Sea*. As a journalist some of his papers on Old Sydney for the *Sydney Mail* have made quite a local sensation.

Mr W. E. Cule, who dates from Cardiff, is a young writer of much promise and not a little performance. He is a careful and conscientious literary craftsman, with a gift of humour, the true story-teller’s instincts, and he is never tedious. His short stories of schoolboy life in *Young England* have delighted all the young folks who have read them, and we are glad to hear they have been reprinted. His brightness and originality tempt comparison with some of the American short story writers. For *Chambers* he has written ‘Lady Stalland’s Diamonds’ and ‘The Anthropologist’s Coat,’ while ‘Old Mr Jellicoe’s Plan’ and ‘Lord Cumberwell’s Lesson’ are yet to come. The reader is safe with anything to which Mr Cule’s name is attached. This in brief is the story of his literary career:

‘I came to take to writing, I believe, because of my insatiable love of reading, and as a result, also, of my admiration for everybody who wrote books I liked. I was intended for commercial work, and made one or two attempts in that direction, writing all the while in my leisure time. My first efforts, at the age of sixteen or so, were made in the “Literary Olympic” of *Young Folk’s Paper*. This was a page where young authors might exercise their energies; and among my companions at that time, but far before me, were two whose names are better known now, Mr R. Murray Gilchrist and Mr A. J. Adcock. My first profitable venture was made in 1892, when Mr Edward Step (now literary adviser to F. Warne & Co.) accepted one of my stories for a boy’s magazine. In 1894 one of my stories went to Mr Andrew Melrose, manager of the Sunday School Union; and it is through his kindness of suggestion and encouragement that most of my work has been done since. In 1895 I was able to devote myself entirely to writing, and in 1899



Mr Melrose published two volumes, *Sir Constant* and *Child Voices*; while Messrs W. & R. Chambers brought out a little fairy book, *Mabel's Prince Wonderful*. I have just been appointed editor of the *Sunday School Teacher*. My age is twenty-nine.

Dr Riccardo Stephens, a young Edinburgh doctor, writes frankly as follows:

'I had published perhaps a couple of short stories and a couple or so of articles, when a friend with more hopes for me than I had for myself badgered me day after day to compete in an American "Mystery Story" competition. I had a shot at last, and wrote the *Cruciform Mark* under rather disadvantageous conditions. The United States people promptly returned it, saying that they did not see any mystery about it. Then Chatto & Windus took the book, and published it in 1896. Bliss, Sands & Co. ordered *Mr Peters* on the strength of that in 1897, and also published *Mr De La Rue Smyth*, which had appeared in the *Westminster Gazette*. Next Mr Sands was rash enough to take *The Prince and the Undertaker* and *What they Undertook* without reading it. I am glad to recollect that I begged him not to buy a pig in a poke, for people generally haven't seemed to care for it. I like it best of all; but that doesn't prove anything. Then I wrote a good bit of another book, but on reading Anthony Hope's *King's Mirror* I suspected that people would say mine was an attempt at imitation; so the thing is unfinished. Every now and then since the *Cruciform Mark* I have published short stories and verses in *Chambers's Journal*, as you know, and in other magazines. I think it is pretty well arranged that John Murray publishes a book of short stories for me as soon as I have written one or two more of a more cheerful nature than some of those that he saw. I don't think I can add anything of the slightest interest, unless you care to know that the more I like a thing the less other people seem to care for it. So that the things over which I sneer and snort (pot-boilers) go out with comparatively great prospects.'

The diffidence of the authoress of *Laddie*, *Don*, and *Pomona* has hitherto prevented her real name and portrait from going forth to the public. But her work is finer, and has more grit, sanity, and beauty, than is the case with hundreds of writers who are better known. It is possible that her *Laddie* may become a classic, like Dr John Brown's *Rab*. Her *Pomona* and *Baby John* appeared first in these columns. This year her new book is *Tom's Boy*, just issued by W. and R. Chambers.

Mr F. T. Bullen, who has made quite a reputation by his *Cruise of the Cachalot*, *Palace of Poor Jack*, and *Log of a Sea Waif*, which comprise experiences and recollections of early days at sea, had some of his first contributions accepted by *Chambers*. Mr O. J. Cutcliffe Hyne, the creator of 'Captain Kettle,' has the advantage of standing six feet two and a half inches high, with a con-

stitution like 'copper nails,' which has been to his advantage in roughing it in many outlying regions of the world, including the Arctic regions, whither he went with the Jackson-Harmsworth expedition.

Mr David Lawson Johnstone, author of *The Rebel Commodore*, is a young writer of great promise and merit, who early left business to work with the pen; and his first article appeared in *Chambers* in 1886. His first tale appeared as a serial in James Henderson's *Young Folks Paper*, in succession to R. L. Stevenson's *Kidnapped*. The *Academy* said of his *Paradise of the North* that it showed far more genuine imaginative power than had been revealed by any new writer for many years; while the *Athenæum* characterised his short story reprinted last year in a collection called *Peril and Prowess* as one of the best in a volume which contained specimens by Henty, G. M. Fenn, and Dr Conan Doyle. His Jacobite tale, 'The Lost Cause,' is reprinted in a collection called *Venture and Valour*. Mr Johnstone's own narrative is interesting because of the light it throws on Mr James Henderson's *Young Folks* and its array of contributors who have since made a name:

'It was at the suggestion of the editor of a Brechin paper that I submitted a short story to a certain periodical called *Young Folks*. It was duly accepted, and thus began a connection that only ended with the decease of the journal. *Young Folks*, although it may never have lain on the tables of the cultured, was a print of some note in its day and generation. Among its contributors it had many writers who have made their mark. Besides Louis Stevenson, who gave *Treasure Island* and *Kidnapped* to the world through its pages—he has himself told the story of the former in *My First Book*—I can recall the names of William Westall, Dr Japp, Max Pemberton, Charles Edwardes, Ascott R. Hope, J. S. Fletcher, Mrs Amelia Barr, Professor Eric Robertson, William Sharp, Alfred C. Harmsworth, Robert Leighton, and Bloundelle Burton. In this connection it would be ungrateful not to mention the proprietor and conductor of the journal, Mr James Henderson. *Young Folks* was his ewe lamb among the many papers issued from his publishing-house, and in it he did much to foster the beginner of promise. There are many writers—I am proud to number myself among them—who found their early path made easier and more pleasant by the discriminating encouragement of the kind-hearted Scotsman of Red Lion Court.

'My humble beginnings, then, may be found in *Chambers's Journal* and *Young Folks*. For a year or two I contributed regularly to the latter, and more spasmodically to other periodicals; and also managed to get some miscellaneous journalistic work—acting for a short time as correspondent to a New York paper. Then Mr Henderson suggested that I should try a serial story for him. "The Mountain Kingdom" was the result.

After running not unsuccessfully in *Young Folks*, it was immediately thereafter (in 1888, when I was barely eighteen) published by Messrs Sampson Low. "The Mountain Kingdom" was the forerunner of a series of stories of adventure in the same paper—all of which were subsequently issued by Messrs Chambers. And for the latter firm I have since done other work of divers kind—with, I hope, as much satisfaction to them and to their readers as to myself.

'Looking over some old numbers of *Young Folks*, I have just noticed one or two curious facts. In 1888, while "The Mountain Kingdom" was running, there was a series of short biographies of great men, entitled "The Secret of Success." The author was A. C. Harmsworth, who has since put his discovery to good use. At the same time, Max Pemberton had a series of articles on various sports. A year or two later the chief writers of short stories were C. Edwardes and Murray Gilchrist, both of whom have since done good work in wider fields.'

Amongst recent story-tellers in *Chambers* have been T. W. Speight, Fred Wishaw, Robert Barr, E. D. Cuming, Carlton Dawe, James Workman, John Stafford, Harold Bindloss (who spins a good West African yarn), John Mackie, Dr Andrew Balfour, Rosaline Masson, Mrs Cunningham-Graham, Mrs Mary Stuart Boyd (wife of Mr A. S. Boyd the artist), James Patey, and Halliday Rogers (Miss Harriet Reid), author of 'Meggot-sbrae.' Isabella Fyvie Mayo, who, though London born, now dates from Aberdeen, had Mrs S. C. Hall as literary godmother, began to write at seventeen, and made her literary reputation at twenty-five with 'Occupations of a Retired Life,' which she had been asked to write for Mr Strahan by Dr Japp, then assistant-editor of *Good Words* and the *Sunday Magazine*. An adverse criticism which one of her books received in the *Saturday Review* drew forth a kindly letter from Mr Ruskin and an invitation to dine with him. She has been twice in Canada and in the East, and has done and is still doing much good magazine work between whites.

Mr John Buchan, author of that fine Tweedside story, 'John Burnet of Barns,' after a remarkably successful career at Oxford, is now reading for the Bar. One is quite prepared to hear that his recreations are shooting, fishing, and mountaineering, for the open-air feeling in his stories and sketches is unmistakable. His younger brother William, author of 'Comedy on the Moors' and 'David and Jonathan of the Hills,' promises to follow in his footsteps.

Mr John Finnmere, author of the new story for the beginning of 1901, 'The Lover Fugitives,' an historical romance set in the period following the Monmouth Rebellion, has published *The Custom of the Country* and *The Red Men of the Dusk*, as well as *Fairy Stories from the Little Mountain*. He dates from Cardiganshire. This is Mr Finnmere's record:

'As regards the manner in which I began to write, I fancy my case is common enough: a touch of *cacoethes scribendi*, and a liberal waste of paper, ink, and spare time. My first attempts—short stories—saw the light in *Household Words*. My first novel, *The Custom of the Country*, was published by Messrs Lawrence & Bullen in 1898. Though well spoken of by *Literature* and other journals, it did not, so far as I have heard, set the Thames on fire. It was followed in 1899 by two books, *The Red Men of the Dusk* and *Fairy Stories from the Little Mountain*. *The Red Men of the Dusk* is founded partly on Welsh legend, and had the good fortune to be well received by a wide range of critical authorities. Two studies of peasant life have also appeared, one in *Temple Bar*, the other in *Macmillan's Magazine*.'

To mention general contributions would be quite an endless business, but we may be excused if we draw attention to coming articles on industrial subjects by one of the best informed and most capable writers of to-day. Mr James Burnley, who is now back to London, wrote while in Chicago, where he had been doing journalistic work, certain papers on 'Industrial Supremacy,' 'Millionaires,' and 'The Trail of the Trust.' Mr Burnley, who is author of the article 'Newspapers' in *Chambers's Encyclopedia*, is also author of about a dozen volumes, such as *Fortunes made in Business* and *The Romance of Modern Industry*. For the last four years he has been making careful observations and gathering material for such articles. To touch the subject of industry at all in America is, he says, to run butt against the great trust problem and get tangled in the mighty operations of the millionaires. The articles represent a great deal of careful work, and are as accurate and up-to-date as it was possible to make them. Mr W. S. Fletcher, of the Cape Government Railways, who has lately been on holiday in this country, came on to Bloemfontein just behind Lord Roberts, and described that place and also the field of Magersfontein. To his daughter we are indebted for a paper on 'Kimberley during the Siege.' Mr Fletcher possesses a copy of the very rare *News of the Camp*, published in Pretoria during the siege in 1881, which he described in the article 'Transvaal Reminiscences.' Mr Alfred Kinnear, war correspondent, early invalided home, has written three times on various subjects.

Mr J. J. Bell, who has made a very promising start as a contributor of verse to many magazines, in 1896 had his first four sets of verses accepted simultaneously by *Chambers's Journal*, *Pall Mall Magazine*, *Pearson's*, and the *Sketch*. Like Mr W. E. Cule, he is still under thirty, which may be one reason why he styles his weekly contributions to the *Glasgow Evening Times* 'A Young Man's Fancies.' More fortunate than most budding poets, he has published about four hundred pieces of verse in various periodicals, besides two volumes

of rhymes for children, *The New Noah's Ark* (1898), *Jack of all Trades* (1899), and *Songs of the Hour* (1900), a booklet of war-verse. Mr Bell, who began writing rhymes for his own amusement, contributed to the *Glasgow University Magazine* (of which he was editor in 1896-97), had his first short story accepted by the *Glasgow Weekly Herald* in 1896, was engaged for a time in

the University Chemical Laboratory, and has since devoted his whole time to writing.

These are but examples: it is impossible in our space to go further. Many names are left out as good as those that have found a place. But those that have so found a place are, we believe, of sterling merit, and no pains will be spared to establish even a more satisfactory record in the future.

## STEPHEN WHITLEGE'S REVENGE.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.



HEN Stephen reached home, after his interview with Victor Benfield, he found Jacob Pummelow, his old man-servant, and his father's before him, wheeling a barrow across the yard. The rattle of the iron wheel upon the cobble-stones sounded in his ears like so much demoniacal laughter. Now, if there was one person in the world of whom Stephen stood in any sort of awe, it was of Jacob; the old fellow had a sharp and bitter tongue, and a knack of letting fall in an apparently innocent way little observations that stuck like thorns in the flesh and rankled for hours afterwards. Among other things, he had brought the study of the proverbs of his native land to a high state of perfection, and was wont, when occasion offered, to fire them off like minute-guns. Anger and reproof were alike wasted upon him. If such a thing were possible, he was more obstinate than his master; and when once he had made up his mind to do a thing, he clung to his purpose like a limpet to a rock. On this occasion he looked up as his master approached, and noticed that the latter's face was clouded. He prepared his discourse accordingly.

'You be lookin' fair poorly this mornin', Master Stephen,' he began. 'Twas what I said to myself as soon as I set eyes on 'e. My sight may be failin' me, as the sayin' goes; but, old man as I be, I can see well enough for that.'

'Confound you and your eyes!' growled his master. 'You are always croaking.'

'Ay, ay,' said the old man cheerfully, putting down the barrow and rubbing his wrinkled hands together as he spoke. 'Tis the way of old folks. They bairn't able to help theirselves, I'm thinkin'. "Flesh is but grass," says the Preacher, and the time will come when, strong man as ye be, ye'll be like poor old Jacob here, good for naught but churchyard mould.'

'Twould be better if some people were there already,' said Stephen pointedly. 'If flesh were grass, as you say, I could find the devil a good hay-crop.'

'Tis the way of youth to speak such vain words,' persisted old Jacob, who, having once found a listener, was not prepared to let him slip

again. 'I mind me now that young Squire Bembridge talked the same way the very day that he was shot in Three-Mile Wood. "Pummelow," says he, just as you be speakin' now, "life may be short, but I'll make the most of it." Poor dear! how was he to know that that night he'd be lyin' stark and stiff with a bullet through his head? But there, there, ye're young and full of your own conceit; but ye'll go his way as like as not. What says the?—'

Stephen waited to hear no more, but strode across the yard to the house. He was familiar with the story of poor young Bembridge's murder; but what motive had the old fool for bringing it up on this morning of all others? He sat down to his accounts and the general business of the day, but, try how he would, he could not concentrate his attention upon the matter in hand. He found his thoughts continually reverting to Bembridge's murder, and from it to Mildred and the Captain. They were happy enough without him. He might be dead—ay, lying dead in Three-Mile Wood with a bullet in his brain—for all they would bother about him.

That night when he went to bed he could not sleep. He tossed and tumbled on his couch, always with the recollection of the old man's words ringing in his ears. Next day it was the same, and again the day after. But this state of things could not last long. When he woke on the Thursday morning his brain was on fire and his hand shook so that he dared not trust himself to shave; therefore, without performing the operation, he dressed and then descended to his sitting-room. There, following a habit he had developed of late, he poured out half a tumbler of brandy and drank it off. Sheepishly, as if he were half-ashamed of what he was doing, he crossed to a cupboard in the corner of the room, and from it took a rifle which he had purchased earlier in the year. Still with the same curious expression upon his face, he weighed it in his hand, and then, with a shudder, replaced it in the cupboard, only to bring it out again for another inspection a few minutes later. This time he took a cartridge from a box and dropped it into the breech. Once more he put the weapon back, locked the cupboard, and seated himself at his desk, resting his



head upon his hands. His breakfast was dismissed untouched. He could not eat with this thought in his brain. At last, seizing his hat, he left the house, fled from old Jacob—who had prepared several more home-truths for him—and, finally, crossing the bridge, made his way through the village in the direction of the Vicarage. Why he should have chosen that path on that particular morning he could not have told you had you asked him; but the fact remains that when he reached the gate he was just in time to find Captain Benfield's dog-cart pulled up before it. The Captain was seated in it, his gun-case was propped up beside him, and Mildred was standing in happy conversation by the horse. Still impelled by the same mysterious force which had driven him from home, he walked towards them. Mildred was the first to notice him, and she gave a little start of alarm as she realised what a wreck the man, once so strong, had now become.

'Hullo, Stephen!' said the Captain cheerily as the other approached, 'so you are able to get away after all. Good Heavens, man, how ill you look! What on earth have you been doing with yourself?'

'Nothing,' Stephen replied angrily. 'I am as well as I have ever been in my life. No, I can't come with you to-day. I have several important appointments, and can't afford to waste my time as you seem able to do.'

Without another word he continued his walk until he reached a wayside public-house—his own property. Entering the bar, he called for brandy, and when the bottle was placed before him, almost filled his glass. He drank it off, and then went on his way again, to come to a standstill presently on one of the iron bridges to which allusion was made at the commencement of the story. It was by his own exertions that that bridge had been placed there, and now, as he stood looking down at the swiftly-running water below, he could have cursed the day he had moved in the matter, for a low mocking laugh seemed to come up to him from beneath the arch. That decided him.

'I'll do it,' he muttered hoarsely. 'If it costs me my life, I'll do it. What right has he to steal her from me?'

The river ran red as blood beneath him, and the mocking laughter continued without cessation. Unable to bear it any longer, he left the bridge and strode homeward as fast as his legs could carry him. From the moment that he had made up his mind, a peace such as he had not known for days had come to him. During the afternoon he was as business-like and as collected as usual; it was not until dusk began to fall that his old restlessness returned. Then, try how he would, he could not remain quiet. He paced his room, paid repeated visits to the mill, went out and watched the placid surface of the mill-pond, upon which the swallows were darting hither and

thither; and when at last all his men had left the premises, and he was sure that he was not being watched, he returned to the house, drank another half-bottle of brandy, and then paid a visit to the cupboard in which reposed the rifle. This time there was no hesitation. He took it from its resting-place, dropped a couple of venomous-looking cartridges into his pocket, and then, letting himself out by a side-door, crossed the narrow strip of garden and passed into the meadows beyond. A hare, down for a night's feed from the uplands, sprang up before him; but he did not see her. A couple of wood-pigeons, sighting the weapon he carried in his hand, flew from a tree above his head with a noisy flutter of their wings; but he paid no attention to them. He was conscious only of one thing, and that held him as in a vice. His mind's eye was picturing a high dog-cart drawn by a fast horse, and driven by a man who knew what he was about. It was a swift-moving target. Could he possibly manage to hit it? At any rate he was going to try; and if he could, what then? That was a question he dared not answer just at present.

Long shadows were already drawing across the valley. It was a perfect autumn evening, and the picture presented to him would have been difficult to equal for pure landscape beauty. At last he reached the high-road, which, as I have elsewhere said, ran for some miles at the foot of the Downs. He looked to right and left, but no sign of the dog-cart he wanted was to be seen. It was a considerable drive from Green's Farm, and he knew that Victor would be likely to shoot as long as it was light; so, having arrived at this conclusion, he crossed the road, and made his way along the hillside until he came to a small copse beside a disused chalk-pit. Here he was able to conceal himself effectually, while at the same time he could command a good view of the high-road on either hand. A pulse was beating inside his head like a steam-hammer, and the long strip of dusty road danced before his eyes like a ribbon shaken by the wind. He felt confident, however, of being able to shoot straight enough when the time should arrive. The wind sighed through the branches of the trees above him, and the rustling of the leaves sounded in his ears like the whispering of evil counsellors. They urged him to be careful of his aim, and by so doing to avenge himself for the wrong his enemy had done him. He clutched his rifle tighter and again scanned the road. Once more, however, he was unsuccessful in his search. A quarter of an hour passed, and still there was no sign of the dog-cart. Then a black speck made its appearance about a mile away, which grew gradually larger until it took the form of the cart for which he was waiting. Presently he could distinguish the Captain's face, and even the brass corners of the gun-case

propped up beside him. Only a few yards now, and he would be within easy range. He drew the stock of the rifle closer to his shoulder, and glanced along the barrel. His finger was on the trigger, and all he had to do now was to bend the finger and the bullet would speed upon its fatal mission. Then—— Suddenly he threw up his head. What on earth did this mean? The driver had brought his horse to a standstill exactly opposite where he lay, and was deliberately lighting a cigar. Stephen stared at him with eyes aghast. What did he mean by pulling up in such a place? Was he courting certain death? The man must be mad to run such a risk. He saw the match burst into flame, and a moment later the smoke of the cigar curl up into the evening air. His gaze was riveted upon the dog-cart and its occupant. Do what he would, he could not withdraw his eyes, nor act as he intended. For the time being he was hypnotised and powerless. Then, almost before he knew what had happened, the Captain had started his horse again and had turned the corner of the hill.

Dropping his head upon his hands, Stephen burst into such a paroxysm of weeping as he had not known since he was a child. This was succeeded by a desperate calmness that was almost death-like. Hour after hour he lay on the damp grass, scarcely moving. Night fell; the stars shone out; still he remained in the same position. The evening mist rose from the river and wandered like a ghost among the trees; but he paid no heed to it. At last, staggering like a drunken

man, he rose and looked about him. He saw his rifle lying among the leaves, picked it up, and slowly descended the hill, cursing himself for a coward as he went. It was nearly midnight by the time he reached the mill once more. The clack of the wheel seemed to mock at him, and the hooting of an owl perched upon the barn sounded like a lost spirit triumphing at his discomfiture. He shook his fist at it, entered the house, and made his way to his sitting-room, where he deposited his rifle in its accustomed place. Pouring out a glass of spirits, he tossed it off; another followed, and still another. At last, reeling to his room, he threw himself upon his bed without removing his clothes, but not to sleep. Next morning he was delirious, and the old crone, his housekeeper, despatched Jacob, who promptly regarded himself in the light of a prophet, for the doctor. From that day forward, for nearly a month, Stephen wrestled with death, and when he looked upon the world again it was as a man so changed that the folk he met scarcely recognised him. If he had been silent and morose before, he was doubly so now; he seldom left the mill, and when he did so, spoke to no man. Then, to the astonishment of the village, news went abroad that the mill was for sale, and that Stephen Whitledge was leaving England for South Africa, never to return. Accordingly, one winter's morning, without farewell to any living soul, he set off along the high-road to Salisbury, on the first step of the long journey that was to end as you will presently see.

## F A R - S E E I N G.



THE writer recalls a Christmas party at a vicarage-house on the banks of the Tees thirty years ago. The evening was growing late, and the curate, a south-country man fresh from Oxford, having just left the house, came hurrying back to announce that there was a beautiful auroral display in progress. No one, however, stirred abroad to see it. In vain the young man expatiated on the wondrous flickering flames that were being flung across the sky. He could arouse no enthusiasm, for the fact was that we all knew that aurora. It was an impressive spectacle, certainly, and only occasionally well seen; but it was simply born of the furnaces in the Black Country fifty miles away. Over half that distance the shimmer of the North Foreland Lighthouse is well seen in the sky under certain conditions; and when these conditions prevail the night-watchmen round the coast are wont to say that stormy weather is at hand.

It follows, virtually as a matter of course,

that when the air is charged with excessive moisture the canopy overhead will reflect at night-time any strong glare from earth. Instances of far-seeing in broad day are common enough in many parts of England. From the writer's house, standing high above the Kennet Valley, the outline of the Hog's Back in Surrey is frequently to be clearly sighted on the eastern sky-line after morning hours. This is across a range of thirty-five miles as the crows flies, the most favourable conditions being such as prevail when plumping showers are around, and when hills that are, or should be, ten miles away have approached to within six miles or thereabouts.

However, greater marvels of long-seeing reach us from the clearer skies of other climes. Humboldt tells us that the transparency of the mountain air is so great under the equator that in the province of Quito the white cloak of a horseman may be distinguished with the naked eye at a horizontal distance of eighty-nine thousand six hundred and sixty-four feet. This is a very precise measurement, certainly, and works out as

exactly thirty-two yards short of seventeen miles : surely a record of its kind.

It is clear that terrestrial objects should be better seen when elevated above the denser strata that lie near the earth's surface, and the truth of this is borne out by the occasional extreme clearness of mountain peaks. The writer has observed the crest of Kinchinjunga from Darjeeling apparently so near as to be within easy rifle-range, yet forty miles of valley really lie between; but this is as nothing, for it is said that the towering cumulus clouds over thunderstorms on the American prairies may sometimes be seen on the horizon at a distance of two hundred miles. Conversely, if the observer occupies a very elevated standpoint, his range of vision, under favourable atmospheric conditions, may become very extended indeed. The balloonist is aware of this on occasions; and, though thoroughly favourable opportunities are comparatively rare, it is probably from a balloon sailing in the free air that the farthest unaided sight-seeing has been recorded. Once when about four miles high over London, Mr Glaisher saw not only the whole English coast-line to south and east, clearly distinguishing the towns of Brighton, Dover, Deal, and Margate, but could descry Ipswich and the sea actually beyond Yarmouth, which could be little less than one hundred and twenty miles away.

Where neither the object viewed nor the point of observation is greatly elevated, it should need no pointing out that a physical barrier necessarily prevents the possibility of vision; but this fact is perhaps seldom fully realised. Thus it has been suggested that Lincoln Cathedral ought to be visible from the towers of Ely. Both are lofty buildings on elevated ground, and the country between them is the dead flat of the endless fens; but the two towns are sixty-seven miles apart, and this stretch of intervening country, though to all appearance of a universal level, is obviously rounded by the mere convexity of the earth. The fact is, that each building must stand some thousand feet above the level of the sea to be fairly seen by the other.

At sea, the visible horizon lies at a distance of three miles from an observer whose eye is six feet above the water's edge; while to the same observer the top of a ship's mast sixty feet high would disappear from sight when twelve miles off.

The light of the sun can be seen reflected off a surface of sufficient size and brilliancy over unlimited space. It is seen by the naked eye reflected off the surface of Saturn when nearly a thousand million miles away. This fact is turned to account in the modern heliograph, the limitations of which lie only in the occasional difficulty of finding an observer's position. It usually suffices to sweep the horizon towards the most likely

points with the flash until this is answered, when accurate signalling is at once established. In the Waziri Expedition of 1881 direct communication was thus kept up across an interval of seventy miles. The flashes can also when necessary be thrown on to the clouds, and it is stated that under favourable conditions signals have been read as much as one hundred and ninety miles away.

Assuming that in the foregoing well-attested records we have the means of determining the present limit of human unaided vision, it becomes an inquiry of some interest as to whether the range of human sight has improved or deteriorated with the lapse of time; and the inquiry is not altogether a futile one. Close observation of the heavenly bodies has been maintained from the earliest times, and we have many unquestionable tests of the power of vision—always considered unaided—possessed by the ancients; though at first sight the application of these tests may seem perplexing. Thus, to average modern eyesight the small attendant star hard-by the middle star in the tail of the Great Bear is quite an easy object, yet, according to Humboldt, the Arabs used to call it 'Saidak,' or a test-star with reference to eyesight.

On the other hand, to those who know well where to look for it, and are familiar with its appearance in a telescope, the famous nebula in Andromeda is just fairly visible; yet hundreds of years before the invention of the telescope the ancients had detected it also. It is, of course, very possible to conceive that either of the above objects may have changed appreciably in brightness during historic times; but coming to another well known object infinitely harder to detect, we are met by a fact rather puzzling. The rings of Saturn, as is well known, are only visible in a fairly good telescope even to those who know what to look for, and yet it appears certain that in the mythology of the ancient Chaldees this planet is indicated by the strange representation of a man encircled by a ring. That this remarkable fact should be merely an example of a curious coincidence is hard to credit, and we are almost compelled to fall back on the supposition that in those years the planet's ring-system may have been larger and more conspicuous, and actually discernible by the keen-sighted in the clear skies of Chaldea. Be this as it may, we have another test in the planet Mercury, which, being never far from the sun, must always have been a difficult object, at any rate for systematic observation; yet centuries before the Christian era it had been so clearly seen and accurately watched that the astronomers of ancient days had been able duly to place it among the planets.

On the whole we may assume that the far vision of man is much as ever it was, and its limitations are chiefly a question of atmosphere. When the air is charged with moisture, other things being



equal, it becomes more transparent, much as paper or linen becomes transparent by being wetted. In the clear intervals which commonly separate passing cyclones, or, as we have noted, between recurrent heavy showers, the far distance opens up to our view in a manner almost magical, and the common saying is near the truth that 'the farther the sight the closer the rain.'

The curious phenomenon of apparently seeing farther than the eye naturally can reach claims notice here. The cliffs of the French coast are distant some thirty miles from the town of Hastings, and, though only the surface of the sea intervenes, owing to the mere convexity of the earth, as has been stated, the French cliffs must be wholly hidden from the English side; yet we have unimpeachable testimony that, on a summer afternoon in the year 1798, a crowd of people hurried down to the beach of Hastings to witness the strange spectacle of the whole French coastline from Calais to Dieppe displayed before them, and standing as it were but a few miles to sea. This, of course, was only an unusual occurrence of a phenomenon due to refraction, which is extremely common elsewhere.

Given a perfectly still air, and, owing to the extremes of temperature, a great difference of density in low-lying strata, then at once objects will appear out of their true place, just as the end of a stick immersed in water appears bent. Thus travellers in the desert sometimes see in the mirage pools of water that are not, and Arctic voyagers have clearly before their eyes objects that are absolutely below the horizon. The explanation lies in the most commonplace statement of a fundamental law of optics, and in simple truth we all know the phenomenon perfectly, and may see it almost any day of the year. Watch the sundown, and just when the red orb rests on the sky-line, recall the fact recorded in our earliest text-books that the sun you still see so clearly, by a trick of the atmosphere, is already below the horizon.

It is very commonly supposed that the limits of vision can be indefinitely extended by artificial means, though probably there is no greater mistake. No form of telescope as yet conceived can possibly admit of indefinite enlargement. Setting aside the mere mechanical difficulty of adequately mounting telescopes of large size, other obstacles arise which are manifestly insurmountable. Thus, taking the best-known form of telescope having an object-glass, we may consider the case of the giant instrument at the Washington Observatory, whose compound glass, measuring twenty-six inches across, has necessarily a thickness of nearly three inches at its centre. Through such a thickness of glass at least one-half of the light is actually absorbed and lost. This serious diminution of transmitted light becomes, however, more apparent when we consider the further fact that if the diameter of the glass were doubled the loss of light would be quadrupled.

When, then, we pass on and find that the Washington lens has been surpassed by that of the Lick telescope, possessing an object-glass of thirty-six inches, which again in turn is now distanced by that of the Yerkes instrument, measuring no less than forty inches, one already wonders if there can with much advantage be any great advance in this direction.

When, as in reflecting telescopes, object-glasses are replaced by mirrors, the loss of light by absorption is of course obviated. Yet a worse difficulty remains, for which there seems no remedy. Though we may place our telescopes on lofty mountains under the clearest skies on earth, the disturbance of the great sea of atmosphere still overhead has yet to be settled with; and a moment's consideration will show that the larger the surface of the mirror the greater must be the disturbance introduced. For, take the analogy of disturbed water—say, a clear stream running over a pebbly bed—here and there through small still portions of the water the objects below are seen with but little distortion, but directly the eye is permitted to take in a larger view the increased disturbance is sure to be admitted; and in the case of a telescope it is enough to say that directly any perturbation is introduced the defining power of the instrument is wholly lost. Thus it is only in most favourable localities, and under exceptional atmospheric conditions, that our larger telescopes can even now be utilised with their full apertures and high powers.

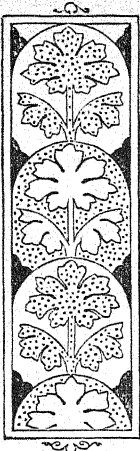
In the Paris Exhibition there was a noble telescope possessing an objective of twenty-six inches in diameter and twenty-six and a half feet focal length, and in this it was hoped we would see an instrument that was unrivalled. When, however, we are told that a power of ten thousand was used upon it, and that by its means the moon could be seen as though only a mile distant, we must regard such statements as simply the grossest exaggeration.

#### SONG.

SUNSET and stars and sea  
All speak of thee;  
Thy name's dear music seems  
Heard in all rushing streams,  
And in all songs the sobbing night-wind sings;  
The mem'ry of thy face  
Seems linked with ev'ry place  
And with all lovely and mysterious things.

All life is filled, for me,  
With thoughts of thee;  
All glory of the sky,  
All holy melody,  
All noble deeds that lift the soul from sin.  
Alas! within thine heart  
No thought of me has part,  
And to thy dreams I ne'er can enter in.

EVA D.



# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### THE QUEEN IN HER COUNTING-HOUSE.

By HENRY W. LUCY ('Toby, M.P.'). Author of *A Diary of Two Parliaments*, *Gideon Fleyce*, &c.



READERS of Rabelais cherish genial memories of Gargantua. With that minute precision not unfamiliar to masters of the art of romancing, we are told that the giant required merely for the body of his shirt nine hundred ells of linen, a trifle of three hundred more going to the gussets. A pair of shoes used up eleven hundred cow-hides, exactly four hundred and six ells of velvet serving for the uppers. His toothpick was an elephant's tusk. Daily for his sustenance were milked seventeen thousand nine hundred and thirteen cows. Being the creation of a Frenchman, he was of course fond of salad, and once incidentally swallowed five pilgrims (and their staves) who had carelessly climbed up among the leaves of the lettuce cultivated for his refectory.

It was whispered at the time that in this fable Rabelais desired to call attention to the extravagance of the French Court, and to the large sums drawn from a labouring people to minister to the pleasure of their sovereign. Such satire, elaborated for application to the Court and customs of Queen Victoria, would fall dolefully flat. The English have no extravagance in high places to deplore. Rather it is among the many virtues of the present reign that the people have set before them an example of frugality in the life and household of the First Lady of the Land.

Nevertheless, from a time reaching back to the days of Lord Brougham, there has sprung up fierce controversy on the question of the portion of the national revenue set apart for the use and pleasure of the Royal Family. In 1850 Lord Brougham brought before the House of Lords a motion for a return of the amount of savings on salaries and pensions in the Civil List. The Civil List Act passed on the accession of the Queen provided that 'for the support of Her Majesty's household and of the honour and dignity of the Crown there shall be granted to Her Majesty for her life a net yearly revenue of £385,000.'

Lord Brougham did not disguise his conviction that very considerable parings were made on the various sums allotted to divers departments, the money thus withdrawn from specific purposes to which it had been assigned by act of Parliament being hoarded in the privy purse. He was a good deal hustled in the House of Lords when he attempted to bring on his motion. Brougham was ordinarily a difficult man to set aside, but somehow or other his motion was burked.

More than twenty years later there was an historic scene in the House of Commons, in which Mr Auberon Herbert, to-day a sound Tory, and Sir Charles Dilke, who has since held Cabinet office, endeavoured to lift the curtain behind which is hidden the secrets of the disposal of the Civil List. Loyal members banded together to defeat what they regarded as an insolent, almost treasonable, attack on royalty. A scene of indescribable uproar followed. One well-known member, the late Mr Cavendish Bentinck, went out behind the Speaker's chair and crowed thrice. That, though introducing a note of novelty into the debate, did not tend to quell the storm. The closure being non-existent, the only weapon in the armoury of Ministers was a motion to clear the House of strangers. This was carried; and, the press withdrawn, the allegations of Mr Auberon Herbert, supported by Sir Charles Dilke, never reached the public ear.

Since 1873, when this incident took place, the question of the national bargain with the Queen has from time to time come up in Parliament. It happened on recurring proposals for grants to members of the Royal Family. Her Majesty has in exceptional degree enjoyed the blessedness that pertains to the full quiver. Sons and daughters as they grew up celebrated their majority, and with unbroken regularity thereafter entered upon the state of matrimony. The pleasure pertaining to these events was tempered to the shorn lamb, the British taxpayer, by fresh demands upon the earnings which in many cases he finds barely

sufficient to maintain his own household. He learned that when in 1837 a pledge was given in his name to set apart considerably over a third of a million sterling for the Civil List, the bargain did not include the maintenance of Her Majesty's children after they had reached their twenty-first year.

The long procession to the altar is now closed. The last of Her Majesty's grandchildren who may be pensioned at charge of the State is provided for, and Liberal Prime Ministers will not be hampered, as Mr Gladstone frequently was, by having to submit and insist upon carrying proposals which his following in the House of Commons openly resented.

The question of the Civil List and of periodic augmentations in the shape of annuities and dowries was not born yesterday, nor even with the reign of her present Majesty. So far back as 1792 it was before Parliament, being raised on a proposal to endow an establishment for the Duke of York. Charles James Fox, in favour of the vote, put the whole question in a nutshell when he asked, 'Is the Civil List inadequate to the purposes of fully maintaining and supporting the children of the Crown?'

The Civil List was settled immediately on the accession of the Queen. In December 1837 it was ordered by the House of Commons that the accounts of income and expenditure of the Civil List from the 1st of January to the 31st of December 1836, with an estimate of the probable future charge on the Civil List of Her Majesty, be referred to a Select Committee of twenty-one members. As a basis of settlement the heads of the various departments of the late king's household were ordered to furnish full particulars of the expenditure during the year 1836. The committee made short work of their allotted task. They took the total charges under specific headings in the various departments, and, with slight variation, fixed them as the amount thereafter to be allowed for the same department in the household of the Queen.

The amount of £385,000 was subdivided into six classes. In the first stood Her Majesty's privy purse, a sum of £60,000 a year being allotted for what, in an ordinary family arrangement, would be known as pin-money. In the second class were grouped the household salaries. In the Lord Chamberlain's department these foot up to £66,499 a year. The Lord Steward's department draws £36,381, the Master of the Horse £27,650, and the Mistress of the Robes a modest £730 a year. For tradesmen's bills, provision amounting to £172,500 per annum was made. For Royal Bounty and special services £9000 a year is provided, with £4200 for those quaint almsgivings with which the sovereign's name has been associated for centuries. Coming down to merely literary, scientific, and artistic people, who have deserved well of their country, but have not

found their deserts in the shape of adequate money payment, the munificent sum of £1200 a year is provided for annual division as pension. Finally, by way of giving the figures that rotundity dear to the heart of Mr Micawber, there is a sum of £8040 called 'unappropriated money.'

The plan adopted by the committee was reasonable enough as the basis of a permanent arrangement. They must in some way arrive at the possible cost of the royal household, and to look into current accounts was as good as any other. But the system of adaptation may be judged from a single incident. The committee found that in the year 1836 the amount of tradesmen's bills coming in to the Lord Chamberlain's department amounted to £41,898. 'Very good,' said the committee in effect, and taking up their pen they wrote down quickly £42,000 as provision for tradesmen's bills in the Lord Chamberlain's department in the new household. It, however, happened that in this the last year of his reign William IV., unconscious of his approaching end, spent large sums of money in 'doing up' his favourite residence. Over £11,000 went to upholsterers and cabinetmakers; locksmiths, ironmongers, and armourers divided £4000 amongst them; whilst joiners and blindmakers ran away with a cool £1000. The total of this exceptional expenditure amounted to over £20,000. It might be supposed that the young Queen was not likely, through a reign long or short, to spend £11,000 a year with the upholsterers, and over £4000 a year in the ironmonger's shop. Strictly bound by the narrow principle laid down for themselves, the committee not only accepted this extraordinary expenditure as the average cost certain to accrue from year to year through the reign just entered upon, but threw in £102 to make even money.

Another example of clear profit made by the Civil List of to-day as compared with that on which it was founded appears in the Lord Steward's department. The Civil List of William IV. was charged with the expense of maintaining the royal gardens, an engagement which in 1836 cost His Majesty over £10,000. This charge is now borne by the State, the royal parks and pleasure-gardens figuring for a large sum in the estimates annually voted by the House of Commons.

It will appear from these particulars that in the royal household everything is provided for on a scale of liberality to meet the charges arising out of the magnificent hospitality of a royal establishment. It is a proposition of unimpeachable mathematics that, viewing the Civil List as it was settled in 1837, one or two things have since happened. Either the amount then allocated must, at certain times, have been found inadequate to the support of Her Majesty's household and the due maintenance of the honour and dignity of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, or at others it must have proved extravagantly excessive.



When the sum was arrived at, the committee had in their mind the maintenance of the Court according to ordinary precedent. William IV. was by no means a spendthrift, but he neglected none of those duties of ceremony and hospitality which from time immemorial have pertained to the royal state. For the first thirty years of the Queen's reign the rule held good. The Court was kept up with at least a moderate measure of splendour. For the greater part of the year the Queen lived in the midst of her Court, from time to time showing herself to her people surrounded by all the attributes of royalty. For twenty years after the death of the Prince Consort the Queen lived in a state of seclusion, the ceremonial duties of the sovereign being abrogated. Since 1880 Her Majesty, to the great delight of her loving subjects, has occasionally been seen amongst them; but what are known as Court functions are rare, not unduly prolonged in the matter of time, and are not ruinously expensive.

It follows that during the last thirty years the expenses of the Queen's household cannot have approached the expenditure which marked the years previous to the death of the Prince Consort. Seeing the precise manner in which particular sums were by act of Parliament allocated to the expenses of particular departments, it would appear that in the course of years the heads of these departments must grievously suffer from an embarrassment of riches. Happily a way out of the difficulty has been found. The household accounts audited and the surpluses ascertained, these last are in due course handed over to the keeper of the privy purse. It would not do for the Lord Chamberlain to put his departmental surplus into his pocket, nor for the Lord Steward to appropriate his, nor for the Master of the Horse to ride off with his savings. Failing the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who certainly does not get the money, the privy purse seems to be the natural reservoir for the tricklings of these surcharged founts.

Apart from the question of savings on the Civil List, the provision of £60,000 a year for the privy purse does not represent one-half of the provision made by the State for the private fortune of the Queen. The Civil List arranged on the basis described, with every possible want lavishly provided for, there was added by way of bonus the revenues of the Duchy of Lancaster. This is, of course, a national estate, the property of the people. In addition to the Civil List, it was bestowed upon the Queen for her private use and benefit. At the time it brought in a moderate little revenue of about £20,000 a year. To-day, by careful management and what is known as unearned increment, its revenues exceed £100,000 a year.

Beyond these provisions direct from the national exchequer, Her Majesty has profited by at least two private legacies. The Prince Consort's will was relieved from the operation of the act of Parliament which requires the preservation in

public registers of all wills proved in the Court of Probate. At the time of his death it was estimated that his accumulated property and cash savings amounted to a million sterling, which was left to the Queen. Nearly fifty years ago a miser named John Camden Nield left the Queen personal property amounting to a quarter of a million and landed estates which increased the value of the bequest to nearly a million. Her Majesty's style of living has not necessitated her drawing on the interest of these bequests, much less of touching the capital. Their accumulation at compound interest in one case for nearly fifty years, in the other for nearly forty, make an aggregate that almost takes away the breath of the ten-pound householder.

There remains to be added the annual savings on the Civil List of £100,000, extending over fifty years, the sum and the period being alike a moderate computation. If, with these figures before us, we contemplate

The Queen in her counting-house  
Counting out her money,

it will appear that the task is more severe than falls to the lot of any beyond perhaps half-a-dozen of her subjects.

A peculiarity of the situation is, that up to a recent period a fundamental principle of the constitution forbade the hoarding of money by the sovereign. The principle in money matters established between the people and the sovereign was that, whilst one pledged itself to provide in liberal measure for the wants of the other, it was careful that there should be no putting away of money which might secretly or openly be used to subvert the liberties of the nation. The understanding was akin to the wholesome principle on which the hospitable board is spread. Those bidden as guests may eat as much as they can, but must pocket none.

By the time Her Majesty had, happily, reigned for thirty-five years with these fructifying, ever-increasing rivers of gold flowing into the privy purse, the situation became exceedingly awkward. Mr Gladstone, at the time Prime Minister, privily appealed to, came to the royal assistance with a bold expedient. In 1873 his Solicitor-General brought in a bill which quietly, almost unnoticed, passed through the Commons in the closing month of the last session of a worn-out Parliament. It was called 'The Crown Private Estates Bill.' Its object was to enable Queen Victoria, and any successor to the throne, to accumulate property and to give or bequeath it in the form of realty or personalty as an ordinary individual might do. The shade of Sir George Cornewall-Lewis, supposing it to have revisited old haunts on this particular night, would have shivered as it regarded its old friend and pupil, Mr Gladstone, responsible for such a measure. Supporting in the session of 1857 a proposal for a dowry for the Princess

Royal, Sir George, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, uttered this weighty dictum: 'It has been deemed a matter of policy in this country to strip and denude the sovereign of all hereditary property, and to render him during his life entirely dependent upon the bounty of Parliament.'

Behind the fortification of this constitutional principle, successive Ministries have defended fresh demands for annuities and dowries for members of the Royal Family. The Prince of Wales draws £40,000 a year, an inadequate sum considering the public duties relegated to him consequent on the practical withdrawal of the Queen from public life. It is, however, supplemented by an annuity of £10,000 for the Princess of Wales, and one of £36,000 yearly divided among his children. The Princess Royal, now Dowager German Empress, still draws her £8000 a year from the British Exchequer. £25,000 a year was voted to the late Duke of Edinburgh when he came of age. When he succeeded to the Dukedom of Saxe-Coburg, one of the wealthiest in-

heritances in Europe, inconvenient questions were asked in the House of Commons as to the reasonableness of continuing a British annuity to one who had practically become a foreign prince. Protest became so threatening that there was every prospect of the Government being defeated if they persisted in defending the payment. In this extremity a compromise was arrived at. It was announced that His Royal Highness had graciously foregone £15,000 a year, holding on to the odd £10,000, a sum paid up to the date of his death.

The Duke of Connaught enjoys his full annuity of £25,000 a year, in addition to his army pay. The Duke of Cambridge's annuity of £12,000 a year is augmented in the same direction. The Queen's three daughters and the widow of the Duke of Albany each draw pensions of £6000.

These payments foot up to £168,000 a year. Added to the £385,000 of the Civil List, it completes a sum of something over half-a-million a year passing through the Queen's counting-house as the national subvention of British royalty.

## STEPHEN WHITLEGE'S REVENGE.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER IV.



HOT African day was approaching its close, and outside the house the shadows of approaching night were drawing across the veldt. The flocks had been driven home, and at the Kaffir kraal, half a mile or so distant, the women were grinding the mealies for the evening repast. The farm of which the kraal formed a portion was a small one, and the owner's residence was of a size to correspond. As a matter of fact it consisted of only two rooms—a living-room and a sleeping-apartment—with two or three outhouses placed conveniently some distance from it. The rooms of the farmhouse itself were roughly furnished, but only with absolute necessities; and each had a wooden ceiling and a mud floor. In the living-room, above the chimney-piece, a weapon of the rifle order was suspended. It had been used, so tradition said, by the owner's father at the time of the great trek, and it was regarded with much reverence in consequence. Two or three pictures of a religious character hung upon the walls; but with these few exceptions the rooms were without ornament or decoration of any sort or description.

Suddenly the door opened and a man entered the room, throwing his soft felt hat aside as he did so. He was somewhat more bronzed than when we had last seen him, but there was no mistaking his identity. He was the man who had proposed so unceremoniously that Mildred Garret should be his wife, and the same who had

waited that night in the copse upon the Downs for Victor Benfield to pass. In the four years that had elapsed since that eventful evening, fortune, which had, in one respect, neglected him in England, had favoured him in the Transvaal. The price he had received for the mill and for the goodwill of the business had been doubled a dozen times over, until he was a rich man even for that land of great wealth. Yet he was not satisfied. He had been a successful speculator in mines, a successful storekeeper, a successful dealer in gold, diamonds, land, and half-a-hundred other things; yet still there were things which money had not been able to buy: forgetfulness of the past and hopefulness for the future. He had in a measure recovered from his disappointment at not winning Mildred for his wife, but he had never been able to induce himself to forgive her or the man who had robbed him of her. If the truth must be told, he was not the sort of man in whom it is possible for time to effect a cure. With him a grievance remained a grievance that multiplied at compound interest, and every small crisis would either be a set forward or a set backward in his attempt to retrieve his loss. He had shaken the dust of England from his feet little more than a year when the news of Victor's marriage reached him, followed shortly afterwards by the announcement of Lord Carlsbridge's death and his son's consequent succession to the title. All that, however, was forgotten when war was declared, and Stephen found himself compelled to throw in his lot with one side or the other. He decided to

favour the Transvaal, and from that moment he hated England with a hatred that was the more violent because he was aware of his own treachery. In due course he had heard of the arrival of Victor's regiment in South Africa, and had watched, with what interest may be imagined, its progress to the front. What was more, he was present on the field of battle when Victor and other three officers and thirty-two rank-and-file were surrounded and made prisoners by the Boers.

Next day Victor was on his way to Pretoria. Stephen's heart had jumped at the thought of his old enemy's humiliation; but even that misfortune was not enough to satisfy him. He wanted to grind the other's face in the dust; to prevent him from ever returning to Mildred. Only then would he be content to let bygones be bygones. Now he sat in the living-room of a Boer farmhouse, twelve miles from Pretoria, waiting for the return of a messenger he had despatched to the capital.

'Confound the fellow!' he said as he threw down the paper he had picked up, 'why doesn't he put in an appearance? He should have been here two hours ago.'

Crossing to the door, he opened it and looked over the veldt. But search the plain as he would, no sign of a horseman could he discover; only a herd of oxen at the foot of a small kopje and a belated Kaffir trudging homewards towards his kraal. He returned to the room and lit the lamp. He had smoked half his pipe when the sound of a horse's hoofs on the track outside caused him to hasten to the door.

'Is that you, Piet?' he inquired, for it was now so dark that he could not see the new-comer's face. 'I've been expecting you these two hours.'

'I could not get away before,' the other replied in Dutch. 'There is great news in the town. The English general, Roberts, has reached Modder River, and they say he is advancing to the relief of Kimberley. Please God, however, Cronje will hold him in check.'

When the other had finished his unsaddling, the two men passed into the house together. The new-comer was the owner of the farm, and in right of his proprietorship now bellowed from the back door to an old Kaffir woman to prepare his supper immediately.

'Now, what about your errand?' Stephen inquired with a little sharpness. 'Were you able to manage it this time?'

'It's all right,' replied the Boer; 'he will escape to-night. All the preparations are made, and by ten o'clock he should be on the other side of the wall. The old Kaffir will meet him as soon as he is out, and bring him here with all speed. Then my part of the business is completed. I can't say that I shall be sorry.'

'You've been very well paid for what you've

done,' Stephen said. 'I don't think you have anything to grumble at.'

'I'm not grumbling,' replied the Boer; 'but a man has to be careful when he helps an English officer to escape. If Oom Paul ever comes to hear that I have had a hand in it'—

'Oom Paul is not going to know,' Stephen returned, 'and for your own sake you won't be foolish enough to tell him. Besides, what does one English officer matter? They have plenty more.'

'But why you should want this particular one is what I cannot understand.'

'That is my own business,' muttered Stephen, with an angry look on his face. 'I want him because I've got a score to settle with him. He played me a dog's trick once, and, like the fool I was, I didn't take my revenge at the right time. But I'm going to have it now, and it will be all the sweeter for the time I have waited for it.'

'The revenge you are going to take is to help him to get back to his friends—is it?'

'He will never get back to his friends,' the other answered. 'I don't mind telling you that. He is going for a pretty little walk about the Free State; and just when he thinks his troubles are at an end I shall appear on the scene and'—

'And?'—

'Well, if you are not there to see, he won't tell what will happen then. That's enough about it. What time do you think he will be here?'

'Not before midnight. It's a good two hours' march from the town.'

'In that case I'm going to take my rest before he comes. Remember, he must know nothing of my presence here.'

'He is not likely to know it if you do not show yourself,' said the Boer. 'You need not fear that I shall tell him.'

Without further ceremony, Stephen retired to the inner room and threw himself upon the bed. Before the other had finished his supper he was fast asleep; and as he slept he dreamt that he was back once more in his old Wiltshire home, and that Victor was calling him a cad for speaking disrespectfully of the Queen.

Suddenly a hand was laid upon his shoulder, and a voice said, 'Get up! He is here.'

Stephen rose at once. The moment he had waited for so long had come at last. With a fierce exultation in his heart, he prepared once more to meet the man for whom he cherished such a deadly enmity. Ten minutes later there was a low knocking at the door, and upon its being opened by the Boer farmer, a tired, dust-stained Englishman passed into the room. An ancient Kaffir could be seen outside, and this was the man to whom Lord Carlsbridge had entrusted his safety and his hopes of happiness. According to the plan he had previously arranged, the Boer made him welcome and placed a meal before him.



Stephen from the inner room watched him as he ate. He had him within his grasp now, and had no intention of letting him slip once more. When Victor had finished his meal and had rested for a time, the farmer suggested that it would be safer if he were to move on again. There was no knowing, he said, how soon the authorities might discover his absence and send a party out in search of him.

'I don't know how to thank you for what you have done for me,' said Victor as he rose to his feet. 'What can have induced you to take such an interest in a total stranger I cannot think; but I thank you, nevertheless. You say that I may place perfect confidence in this Kaffir?'

'That is so,' replied the Boer. 'He knows the country, and will guide you to your friends by the quickest route.'

Victor held out his hand.

'Our countries are at war,' he began, 'but I think we are friends. At any rate, I shall always remember you with gratitude.' Then, taking his watch from his pocket, he held it out to the Boer, asking him to wear it in memory of that evening. The other, however, shook his head.

'I cannot take it,' he said. 'I am not one who wishes to be paid. Go your way now, and be careful how you proceed. You have some hundreds of miles between you and safety.'

Calling up the Kaffir, he gave him some instructions in Dutch, to which the man grunted a reply.

When he had once more thanked the farmer, Victor joined the Kaffir outside, and they disappeared into the darkness together. Then Stephen emerged from his hiding-place.

'He little knows what is in front of him,' he remarked, with a sneer. 'Why didn't you take the watch he offered you?'

'Because I am not a thief,' the farmer replied; and the look he gave Stephen warned the latter not to press the subject too far.

If Victor can ever be persuaded to tell the story of his wanderings for the next month, they will be quite worth hearing. It was a journey made up of bitter privations, of constant dangers, and of never-ending weariness. For the greater portion of the time they travelled only at night, lying hid during the day. More often than not they suffered the pangs of thirst, while food was generally scarce with them, and at no time too plentiful. Treachery menaced them on either hand, while the thought of sickness or the breakdown of his power to endure was to Victor one long-continued nightmare. Had he known that, travelling in comfort in his rear, dogging his steps with relentless persistence, waiting only until Victor should be near enough to his friends to imagine himself safe, before he should spring upon him and recapture him, was the greatest enemy he had upon earth, it is doubtful whether he would have had the heart to proceed. But he

did not know it, and in consequence with every mile he thought himself nearer safety, and nearer the woman he loved best in the world. At last, according to his calculations, only a day's march separated him from his friends. They were hiding at the time in a small open space on the side of a kopje that rose like a tower of observation above the undulating veldt. The sound of distant cannonading to the south had sounded throughout the day almost without cessation. Without doubt a battle was proceeding; but between whom and with what result? The uncertainty only added to his sufferings.

That afternoon Stephen came to the conclusion that the time had arrived for him to play his final card. His victim was near enough to safety now to make the disappointment of recapture doubly severe. He did not know that for nearly a week past Victor had been suffering from an attack of fever, and that but for the Kaffir's devoted care—for this poor savage had gradually come to entertain a great affection for the tender-hearted Englishman, who had treated him as he had never been treated in his life before—he would ere this have reached the end of his tether.

That night the moon was at the full, and on the veldt it was almost as bright as day. Stephen's plans had been excellently prepared, and when the time arrived he set off on foot for the kopje where he knew his enemy lay concealed. Reaching the foot of the hill, he commenced his ascent, treading cautiously so as to make no sound; but, though he did not know it, his presence had already been observed. The old Kaffir was on the alert, and when he saw the black figure creeping from rock to rock, he left the sleeping man's side and crept forward, knife in hand, to meet the new-comer. He had received some inkling of the plot that had been arranged, and though at the time he cared little whether the Englishman was recaptured or not, now, in the light of the affection he had come to entertain for him, he was resolved to defeat it.

Slowly the two men approached each other. Then the Kaffir, with cat-like ingenuity and cunning, made a detour and crept softly round to Stephen's rear. Still the other pushed steadily on, unconscious of the foe behind. He knew that, having progressed so far, he could not be a very great distance from his enemy's hiding-place, and for more reasons than one he was anxious to catch him unawares. But he was destined to be foiled in his purpose, for the native was drawing closer and closer. Stephen was a heavy man, and the long climb up the hill had deprived him of breath. He paused for a moment to recover himself, and this was the Kaffir's opportunity. Springing forward, he hurled himself upon the white man; then, lifting his knife, he drove it in behind the shoulder. Stephen managed to throw him off, when, with

his back against a rock, he pointed his revolver and pulled the trigger. The Kaffir sprang into the air, and a moment later was lying face downwards on the ground. The noise of the shot roused Victor, who struggled to his feet, not realising what had happened. But he was soon to know. When he reached the small open space whence the sound of groans proceeded, it was a strange sight that met his gaze. In the centre the body of the Kaffir lay stretched out, quite dead; while under the lee of a rock, half-sitting, half-reclining, he saw a white man. How had he come there, and what was the meaning of his sorry plight? Trembling like a leaf, he knelt beside the man and looked into his face. A cry that was almost one of terror followed. Then he bent over him and endeavoured to discover the nature of his wounds. One thing, at least, was certain: he was not dead. Having discovered the extent of his injury, he set to work as best he could to stanch the flow of blood. It was a difficult thing to accomplish, but when he had finished, the wounded man opened his eyes.

'What's the matter?' he asked. Then he added, 'Ah! I remember. That treacherous dog got behind me and stabbed me in the back. Is he dead?'

'Quite dead,' Victor replied. 'How did you get here, Stephen; and what is the meaning of it all?'

'Never mind,' growled the other. 'Some day perhaps you will find out. It looks as if it is all up with me.'

'No, no; you mustn't say that,' Victor replied. Then, in an agony of fear, he continued, 'Good heavens, Stephen! what can I do to help you?'

'Let me be. I don't want your help,' the wounded man answered. 'You've got your chance now. Clear out, and save yourself while you have the opportunity.'

But Victor was not to be rebuffed in this fashion. He plucked a quantity of long grass, and made the other as comfortable as was possible under the circumstances. Then he brought him water to drink, and bathed his forehead with what was left.

In this fashion the long, dreary night passed away, until, after what seemed an eternity, the first faint signs of day were to be observed in the sky. With the rising of the sun an unexpected sight was revealed to Victor's eyes. Crossing the plain below were several British regiments, while on the horizon beyond was a moving mass, which he afterwards learned was the Boer army in headlong flight. In the direction in which they were marching it would be necessary for their pursuers to pass the foot of the kopje upon which he was standing. How could he best attract their attention? To fire the revolver lying at his feet would be to allow them to suppose that the kopje was tenanted by the enemy. A storming-party would be the probable result. No; he felt that at any hazard

he must reach the plain below. He wondered whether, in his present condition, he could manage to carry Stephen so far. At any rate he resolved to make the attempt. Stooping over the unconscious man, he took him on his shoulders, and set off, as best he could, down the hillside among the rocks towards the plain below. Weak as he was, it was a herculean task he had set himself; but he grimly held on, and at last succeeded in reaching his destination. Laying Stephen on the ground under the shadow of a rock, he waved his helmet in one last frantic appeal for help. Then his senses left him, and he fell unconscious beside the man he had tried so hard to save.

When he opened his eyes again he found an English officer bending over him and an ambulance-wagon drawn up a few paces away.

'Merciful powers! can it really be you, Carlsbridge?' asked the officer in great surprise. 'How on earth do you happen to be here?'

'I managed to escape from Pretoria,' Victor answered. 'But never mind me. How is he?'

The doctor, who was kneeling beside Stephen, shook his head. Then Stephen opened his eyes, and seeing Victor, muttered something to the effect that he would like to speak to him. The latter went across and knelt beside him.

'Do you know that I was the man who got you out of Pretoria?' he asked, in a voice that was so weak that it was almost inaudible.

'I felt sure of it,' replied Victor, trying to take his hand. 'But I was not certain. How can I thank you?'

'You'd better not thank me at all, because you don't know everything,' said the other, drawing his hand away. 'I helped you for reasons of my own.' He paused as if he were unable to continue.

'If you have got anything more to say to him you'd better say it quickly,' the doctor said, addressing Victor. 'He is almost gone.'

The dying man opened his eyes once more.

'You don't know that I wanted to shoot you that night you drove from Green's Farm,' he whispered. 'I tried to, but at the last moment I couldn't manage it. I got you out of Pretoria because I wanted to let you get within sight of freedom and then catch you and hand you over to—to the Boers again, to be shot. I'd have done it, too, only'—

He murmured something about his having no luck, and followed it with a remark that old Jacob was right after all. Then he died with a little sigh upon his lips.

'You mustn't pay any attention to his last speech,' remarked the kind-hearted surgeon, who had overheard Stephen's confession. 'As often as not they don't know what they are saying at the last.'

'I shall always try to believe that,' replied Victor, more to himself than to the other; and as

he said it he thought of a certain Wiltshire village; of the girl who was now his wife, waiting and praying for him at home; and of the man who had once been his friend and playfellow, but who now lay dead before him.

'Poor old Stephen!' he said to himself as he followed a certain train of thought; 'at any rate I can afford to forgive—for Mildred's sake!'

And '*For Mildred's sake*' was Stephen's epitaph.

THE END.

## HEART-BURIALS IN OUR ANCIENT CHURCHES.

By SARAH WILSON.



SOME of the most pathetic associations connected with our ancient churches concern the separate burial of hearts that have been made in some of them. We shall, probably, never know the circumstances or trains of thought that led to the adoption of this custom, but we may note from the evidence of old wills that it was often a matter of testamentary instruction. In these documents survivors were frequently enjoined to bury the testator's remains in one place and his heart in another. Curiously, while some people dying at home desired their hearts to be taken to Jerusalem, others dying in the Holy Land instructed those upon whom they could depend to send their hearts back to their native country. In the same way, sometimes, in olden times, a bishop whose body was buried elsewhere directed that his heart should be placed in his cathedral, whilst another ordered his body to be interred in his cathedral, but his heart to be sent to some other place specially named. Winchester Cathedral has two examples of heart-burials. One is that of the heart of Ethelmar, who died in Paris in 1291; and the other is that of Nicholas, whose body was buried at Waverley. Chichester Cathedral has another instance. On a monument are representations of two hands holding a heart, and an imperfect inscription in French to the effect that here lies the heart of Maud. The heart of Thomas Cantelupe, Bishop of Hereford, was enshrined in the Lady-Chapel of his cathedral. William de Kilkenny, Bishop of Ely, was buried in Spain in 1256, and his heart sent home to be interred near the high altar of his cathedral. Myles Salley, Bishop of Llandaff, desired that his heart should be buried in Marthern Church; and the heart of Thomas Skevington, Bishop of Bangor, was enclosed in lead and buried in his cathedral.

It has been ascertained by examination of monuments containing heart-burials that a small metal vase, or jar, or box about five or six inches in diameter has served as the depository for the organ so generally considered the seat of the affections. They are usually furnished with lids or covers. The material varies; some are of lead, one has been noticed of iron, and the hearts of persons of high degree have been placed in tiny caskets made of silver. In taking down a wall in Waverley Abbey, a heart was found

between two leaden dishes which were soldered together. In many instances a cavity has been made in the centre of a stone, and the receptacle placed in it, and covered by another stone.

Some churches appear to have been specially preferred in this matter. Ludlow Church, for instance, was chosen for the resting-place of the heart of Prince Arthur, son of Henry VII.; and when Sir Henry Sidney died, though his body was buried at Penshurst, in Kent, his heart was sent to Ludlow, and placed in the tomb that held the remains of his daughter Ambrosia; a third heart buried here was that of a member of the Vaughan family, of Merioneth. Queen Eleanor's heart was buried in Blackfriars' Church, where that of her son Alphonso had previously been interred; though her body, brought with so much pageantry and ceremony from Lincolnshire, was entombed with every solemnity in Westminster Abbey. Two heart-burials have been noticed as having taken place in Waverley Abbey, and two in Ely Cathedral. The Church of the Greyfriars in London was also chosen for this purpose on several occasions.

In Yaxley Church there is a cusped panel in the wall of the north transept on which is sculptured a representation of two hands holding a heart; and on examination a small metal receptacle was found behind it, that had evidently once contained a relic of the kind. As William de Yaxley left directions that his heart should be buried in the wall of the building that he had caused to be erected, it was inferred that this could be no other than the relic in question. A great many mentioned in a similar manner have doubtless been lost to remembrance, and, on the other hand, several of which no previous knowledge existed have been brought to light. In Brington Church there is a stall-end carved with a heart upheld between two straight stiff hands, which doubtless tells of an instance of the kind, now forgotten. Hearts have been incidentally discovered in Chatham Church, Kent; in the chancel of Landbeach Church, between two dishes of wood; in Leybourne Church; in the chancel of Holbrook Church; in Little Hereford, Shropshire; and in Wells Cathedral, among other places.

In the church at Wiggenshall St Mary's is a small fifteenth-century monument with a heart in the centre of it, that once had four labels round it, two of which remain, from which we deduce a



request for prayers for the soul of Sir Robert Kerville. Burford Church has another example. A long inscription sets forth that Edmond Cornwall, Esq., died at Cologne, in the fourteenth year of the reign of Henry VI., and willed that his servant should bury his body there, and enclose his heart in lead and carry it to Burford. Hammersmith Church has the heart of Sir Nicholas Crispe; Catterick Church has that of the son of Sir John Lawson.

When closely examined it will be perceived that a large number of the life-sized stone effigies placed on monuments in our ancient churches have hearts between their folded hands. This is the case with that of a knight in Warkworth Church, Northumberland. In Graveney Church, Kent, there are two effigies, one of which holds a heart. In Gilling Church an effigy of the founder holds a heart with his two hands. A demi-knight holds his heart in Cuberley Church, Gloucestershire. A half-statue of a dame in Narburgh Church, Norfolk, does the same. A dame in Abergavenny Church holds a heart in her bended hands, which are placed just above a large shield on her breast. Sometimes diminutive effigies have been found to indicate the site of a heart-burial. On the north side of the chancel of Holbrook Church, below a very small effigy of a recumbent figure, a heart-casket was found within remembrance. It had a cover with a knob to it, and was very corroded. On raising the lid a chalky, loamy substance was seen within, having bits of charcoal interspersed with it, which was believed by those who made the discovery to be an imperfectly embalmed human heart. A considerable number of brasses, too, show the figures upon them holding hearts. Some of these are demi-brasses or half-length figures, as in the case of the brass of Sir Richard de Baslingthorpe in the church of that place in Lincolnshire. A knight and his dame in Broughton Church, in the same county, both hold hearts in their hands. Those who have made this subject a study find that the number already known to them gives ample evidence of the wide acceptance of the custom. Upwards of sixty have been counted by antiquaries as exhibiting hearts, in various devices, upon them; and now that attention has been called to the subject, we shall doubtless hear of many more. A work by Miss Hartshorne enumerates upwards of two hundred and fifty instances of heart-burials; but some of these occur on the Continent. Apparently the custom of separate heart-burial was as much esteemed by French knights as by our own, and St Denis was regarded in the same light as Westminster Abbey or the purpose.

Henry III. promised his heart to the abbey of Fontevrault in Anjou, where the bodies of his grandfather, Henry II.; his grandmother, Eleanor

of Aquitaine; and his uncle, Richard Cœur-de-Lion, lay. Henry III. was buried in Westminster Abbey, and in due course the abbess of Fontevrault made her claim for his heart. His son, Edward I., in the twentieth year of his reign, gave permission to the abbot of Westminster to make the transfer; and in the presence of the monarch's brother and uncle, and the bishops of Durham, Bath, and Wells, and many more of his faithful lieges, it was delivered to her care and keeping, to be carried to the monastery of Fontevrault, according to his intention. The widowed queen of James II. also bequeathed her heart to a French monastery, where were those of her husband and daughter.

Gradually the custom fell into abeyance. At first the hearts of several of our monarchs were placed in small receptacles and buried with them, resting on their coffins. The hearts of Charles II., Queen Mary and her husband, William III., Queen Anne and her husband, George Prince of Denmark, were all encased in silver, and placed on their respective coffins. Then the severance of the heart was discontinued in this country, except in very rare instances. Sir William Temple desired that his heart should be buried under the sundial in the garden he loved so well. The Marquis of Montrose's heart had strange adventures; Blake's was deposited in St Andrew's Church, Plymouth; and the great Condé's was buried away from his body. Vauban's is in the Invalides; Kellermann's on the field of Valmy; Gambetta's beneath his monument. The Polish patriot Kosciuszko's has been deposited in a Polish museum in Switzerland, far from Poland, but also far away from the reach of the Russian oppressor! Dan O'Connell's was sent to Rome. Shelley's, 'cor cordium,' was given into the keeping of Mary Shelley. Byron's was sent home for burial from Missolonghi; whereas Dr Livingstone's was buried in Africa when his body was brought back to Westminster Abbey.

The heart of the late Marquis of Bute, which at the funeral from Cumnock House was carried in a box, in accordance with his last wishes, was conveyed to Palestine for burial at the Mount of Olives.

There are many aspects to this pathetic custom. When we think of the fortunes of hearts after death, the romance of that of Bruce comes first to mind. The terrible tragedy concerning that of the Lord de Coucy is another incident graven indelibly in our remembrance. It is treated in a German ballad by Uhland, given in Miss Hartshorne's *Enshrined Hearts of Warriors and Illustrious People*. Apart from such deviations, we can but feel the pathos of the strong desire in so many cases that the heart should be with its treasure, which we may conclude was the companionship of those it had loved when living.

## A CRIMINAL MYSTERY OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

(TRANSLATED AND ABRIDGED FROM THE FRENCH.)

**T**HE excitement caused in Paris by the Sainte Croix and Brinvilliers poisoning disclosures had scarcely calmed down when the citizens were thrown into a state of the greatest alarm by very strong evidence that the secret of Sainte Croix had not died with him, or that some other equally potent poison was being extensively used. Invisible murder decimated families, and no art could fight against the scourge which respected neither wealth, age, nor social position. Even members of the Court of the Grand Monarch were not spared, and the King, at the request of his Ministers, created a special tribunal, whose mission it was to detect secret crimes and punish the authors without mercy. This court of justice, called the *Chambre Ardente*, sat at the Bastille, and had for president Monsieur La Reynie. Assisted by the police agent Desgrais, La Reynie managed to unearth La Voisin and her confederates, and the faggots of the Place de Grève effectually destroyed the most atrocious poisoning gang of the century.

The ashes of La Voisin had hardly been dispersed when Paris again became greatly excited and terrified over a new series of murders. This time the dagger was substituted for the phial; but the crimes were quite as mysterious as were those of the female poisoner before she was brought to justice, and they were equally uniform in their character. It was invariably one of the gentry who was killed; the deeds were always done about midnight, and in the same manner—namely, by a single dagger-stab in the region of the heart; and in no case was there any sign of a struggle. The motive was clear, for in each case the victim was robbed of some valuable jewel or trinket; and not the least mysterious feature in the crimes was, that the murderer or murderers seemed always to know when any fine piece of jewel-work was carried.

One day in the month of October 1680 it was announced, much to the relief of the fashionable world, that Desgrais had succeeded in arresting the murderer practically red-handed, and had taken him before the *Chambre Ardente*. It turned out that the accused was a young Swiss gold-worker named Olivier Brusson, who had been found in the dead of night stooping over the body of a man who had evidently just been murdered. A dagger covered with blood was lying by the body, and there were particles of blood also on Brusson's hands and sleeves. Strange to say, for the first time in this series of crimes, the victim was not one of the *haute noblesse*, but was none other than René Cardillac, perhaps the most noted Parisian goldsmith of his time, and the

employer of the accused man, Brusson. The latter, who hailed from Geneva, had only been in Paris for a few months, and, when examined by La Reynie, stated that, with the exception of a few young men in his own walk of life, he was acquainted with no one in the city, and knew nobody of influence to whom he could appeal as to his character. He denied any complicity whatever in the murder, though he admitted having seen the deed done; but further than that he would say nothing. The facts that no stolen property was traced to Brusson, and that inquiries into his mode of life and habits were favourable to him, seemed to lend colour to his declaration of innocence; but his obstinacy in refusing to disclose all he knew went against him, and La Reynie announced that he would see what torture could do to extract the secret. It was then that Brusson remembered that his mother had formerly been in the service of Mademoiselle Scudéry, the poetess, now an old lady in high favour with the King and Madame de Maintenon, and of whom his mother had always spoken in the highest terms; and a bright idea struck him. He offered to disclose the details of the tragedy to Mademoiselle Scudéry, and to seek her advice, assuring La Reynie that a deep sense of honour prevented him from going further at this stage. La Reynie, not caring to risk the King's anger by a refusal, consented to this course, but assured Brusson that nothing would save him from torture to the death if he refused to place his information before the *Chambre Ardente*.

The same night Brusson was taken under guard to the residence of Mademoiselle Scudéry, who had been advised of the intended visit, and she gave Brusson a sympathetic welcome, making affectionate references to his mother, who had been her faithful maid in years gone by. Brusson informed Mademoiselle Scudéry that he was apprenticed to a goldsmith at Geneva, and on the expiration of his time came to Paris on the advice of his friends, to enter, if possible, the *atelier* of Cardillac. Cardillac received him coldly at first, but after testing his powers as a workman, gave him employment. Here he laboured with assiduity for some weeks, when one day he saw Cardillac's daughter, with whom he fell in love at first sight. This affection was apparently reciprocated, and she would often visit the studio, so that the amour made rapid progress between them. Brusson had only one desire: to merit the hand of Madeleine by good service to her father. The goldsmith by some means discovered the existence of his passion, and, highly indignant, ordered Brusson out of doors at once, telling him at the same time that the fruit he

coveted would never ripen for such as he. Brusson, unable to seek a new master, spent all his time prowling around Cardillac's house in the vain hope of seeing Madeleine.

Opposite to the house of Cardillac was an old and high wall in which are several niches containing statues of stone or whitened wood. One night when Brusson was near the wall, and leant against one of the statues, he felt it move as if it had come to life. He started in terror, and turned, when he saw the statue revolve as if on a pivot, and from the cavity which it disclosed there leapt forth a man. Brusson could not distinguish the features of the man, but followed him up, and the light of a lamp disclosed his old master, Cardillac, who took shelter in the shadow of an old house, as if waiting for some one. Brusson concealed himself in the shadow of another portico near by, and watched what might happen.

Brusson then continued his story as follows:

'Very soon there appeared a richly-dressed man, singing and walking with a lively pace, as if quite unconcerned and in a most happy mood. At the moment when he passed before Cardillac's porch the goldsmith leaped out upon him like a tiger, and the stranger was thrown to the ground. Cardillac seemed to lean over him and feel about his clothes. I uttered a cry of horror and alarm, and then called out, "Cardillac! Cardillac! in the name of Heaven, what are you doing?" The goldsmith raised himself with a movement as if of rage, and hastily returned in the direction from which he had come. Meanwhile the stranger remained lying on the ground without movement. I went towards him, trembling with terror, for I instinctively felt that he was dead. In my stupor I did not perceive that an armed patrol surrounded me. "Ah! what is this?" cried the chief. "See, monsieur," said I, "it is a new victim of the band of murderers who are desolating Paris. He fell before my eyes, and I ran to succour him." "Your story will soon be examined," replied the chief; and without giving me time to justify myself further, the soldiers bound and dragged me along with them. A few minutes afterwards I was pushed into a cell in some fortress, and left there.

'At break of day I was suddenly awakened, and saw Cardillac in person before my eyes. "*Grand Dieu!*" said I, "what do you want here?" The goldsmith seated himself on a box, and with perfect *sang-froid*, which upset all my ideas, said, "My poor boy, I have been a little hard with you. I confess that I have deprived myself of my best workman. Your love for Madeleine, which you concealed so well, angered me, and without consideration I sent you away. Since that time I have recalled your good qualities, your zeal, and your probity; and, above all, I know not where to find a husband more acceptable to my daughter. Will you return to me, and we will arrange one day to betroth you to Madeleine?" I found not a word to reply, the extraordinary conduct of Cardillac com-

pletely disabling me. Cardillac continued, "You say nothing. You prefer a visit to La Reynie to my protection. Take care of yourself. Who touches fire is often burnt." At this menace I could not contain myself, and said, "It is another conscience than mine that need be troubled by the name of La Reynie. I have, thank God, nothing to fear." Cardillac replied, "Take care; calumny will fall before my high reputation. If Madeleine did not love you so, and if her life was not more dear to me than is my own, I should not be here now. Therefore she awaits you." The surprise and joy I felt at the news about Madeleine, mixed with my horror of her father, overpowered me, and I lost consciousness from excess of emotion.

'On coming to myself again, I found I was in Cardillac's house. Madeleine, who was watching me, threw herself into my arms directly I opened my eyes, and it was for me a time of supreme felicity. But my peace of mind did not last. Depositary of Cardillac's odious secret, I felt myself torn with remorse, and sometimes I imagined I was an accomplice of his crimes. During our hours of work I could scarcely keep my thoughts from the murderer, and was unable to comprehend how he could lead such a double life. Tender father, admired artist, respected citizen, he seemed able without difficulty to mask under his virtues the most atrocious conduct. My heart almost broke at the idea that Madeleine would probably one day fall under the odium attaching to the dishonour of her father, and this fear was for Cardillac the surest guarantee of my discretion.

'One day Cardillac entered the workshop more melancholy and preoccupied than usual. He spent several minutes in attending to the setting of some jewels, and then all at once he came briskly towards me and said, "Olivier, this position is no longer tenable. You are master of a secret which all the police of Paris have failed to discover. Your bad star has made you my forced accomplice." "Your accomplice," cried I; "never, never! Sooner will I die a thousand deaths." "Listen," said Cardillac. "I have something to tell you; and when you know me better, in place of blaming me, you will pity me. From my infancy I have had a passion for jewels—a strange and unholy passion—which would seem to have been born with me, for it was often uncontrollable. So strong was the attraction that I became a thief before I reached the age of adolescence. My father chastised me severely for my thefts, and for several years the punishment I received combated the destiny which menaced me; but nature always triumphs sooner or later. I was apprenticed to a goldsmith, my father thinking that by having jewels constantly before me I should be able to calm my passion. I very quickly acquired great skill at my work, and when I had duly served my term, I had no difficulty in establishing a business for myself. Work



pressed upon me; every one appeared to require my services, and I rapidly became well placed on the road to fortune. I had exercised immense control over myself for a very long time; but my good resolutions became weaker and weaker, and I felt myself tormented more than ever by the frightful desire to appropriate the jewels confided to my care. I commenced by robbery; I finished by murder. My profession gave me access to the great, and my wealth induced them to repose in me the blindest confidence. I was able to abstract from the houses of the owners, when I was called in for consultation as to mounting, jewels of great value, and never once was I suspected. My cupidity grew with my success, and after I had commenced to murder for gems, I felt an inconceivable hate grow upon me for all who possessed precious stones. It was at this period I bought this house, and the secret passage it contains led me to organise the system of murder which has so horrified Paris. In the large room adjoining this *atelier* is a movable panel which, when pushed aside, discloses a trap-door. From this descends a staircase leading to a tunnel under the road. The exit from this tunnel is by means of steps rising to a chamber secreted in the big wall. A spring opens the door of this chamber, which slides round a niche containing a statue. The statue is fastened to the door, and turns with it, this arrangement having been made apparently for the purpose of better concealment. The house was formerly part of a monastery, the monks of which doubtless had the tunnel constructed. I was in a better position than any one else in Paris to know when valuable jewels were carried, and hence I was seldom short of a victim for my dagger. Am I a ferocious monster? No; it is my fatal destiny."

"After this terrible recital," continued Olivier, "Cardillac conducted me to a cellar beneath the house, where I saw on shelves and in drawers more wealth in gems than one would find in the treasure-house of a king. Near each article was a label on which was inscribed the name of its former owner. "The day when you espouse Madeleine," said Cardillac, "you will swear to me that after my death you will destroy all these jewels."

"This ended the interview. I resolved, if I could, to prevent Cardillac continuing his crimes, and for a few days watched him very carefully, without, however, seeing anything to lead me to suppose that he contemplated another dreadful *coup*. But one afternoon a certain restlessness in Cardillac's manner led me to think it advisable that I should watch him in the approaching night. Accordingly, at a late hour, when he supposed that I had retired to rest, I left the house by the secret passage, and concealed myself in an angle of the wall, wherein no light could enter to reveal my presence. I had been there about an

hour, when I saw Cardillac come from behind the statue. I followed him at a distance with caution, but near the corner of the Rue Saint Honoré he disappeared like a spectre. He could not have gone far, so I posted myself in a doorway to watch. Soon afterwards an officer in rich costume passed right in front of me, and he had gone by me but a few paces when a black shadow leaped out from behind him, and the two fell to the ground. I ran towards them with a cry of horror, when the officer rose quickly and walked rapidly away. I then saw that this time it was Cardillac who was killed. I bent down and tried to lift him to see if there was a chance of restoring him; but at that moment I was arrested by the watch, and you know the rest.

"I am innocent of all crime; but no torture will force me to confess the horrible mystery, for Madeleine must be saved from a knowledge of her father's crimes. The *Chambre Ardente* can do with me as it will, and I am ready to suffer; but I want to implore you when I have succumbed to the final struggle that you will watch over Madeleine."

Such was the story of Olivier Brusson. Mademoiselle Scudéry was deeply moved, and promised to interview the King with a view to securing Brusson's release without the necessity of exposing Cardillac's crimes. It is doubtful, however, whether all the influence which the elegant lady-writer could bring to bear on the King would have sufficed to save the accused had it not been for the fact that the person responsible for the death of Cardillac himself came forward and disclosed for the secret ears of Mademoiselle Scudéry and the King the circumstances of the tragedy. This was the Count de Moissens, colonel of the King's Guard. It seems that when the Count sent his valet to Cardillac for a diamond ornament which had been made for him, the goldsmith asked the servant what time his master intended to take the ornament to the lady for whom it was intended. The valet gave the required information, but told his master what Cardillac had asked him. This excited the suspicion of the colonel, who took the precaution to wear a steel breastplate when he went as proposed to deliver the handsome present. The result was that Cardillac's dagger failed to accomplish its accustomed work, and the Count slew the assassin, so that he met the fate intended for the Count. Asked why he did not come forward sooner and declare the innocence of Brusson, Moissens referred Mademoiselle Scudéry to the action of the *Chambre Ardente* in regard to the Duc de Luxembourg, who was imprisoned in the Bastille and subjected to much ignominy by La Reynie when there was no ground of suspicion whatever against him beyond the fact that he had once visited the poisoner La Voisin on a fortune-telling errand; and it may here be remarked

that the King subsequently admitted that the severity of La Reynie did as much to hide crime as to detect it.

The sequence of the tragedy was rapidly decided after the declaration of Count Moissens. The King, after a secret interview with the Count and La Reynie, and several discussions with Mademoiselle Scudéry, recommended the *Chambre Ardente* to declare the innocence of Brusson. This recommendation was at once confirmed by the *Chambre*, and the goldworker was set at liberty, it being, however, understood that he must leave France. Brusson married Cardillac's

daughter, and retired with her to Geneva; but before leaving, the King presented Madeleine with a *dot* of a thousand louis.

A year after these events a notification was published throughout France, under the seal of De Chaumpevalon, Archbishop of Paris, to the effect that a sinner lately dead had left to the Church a large number of jewels which had been acquired by theft. Persons who had lost jewels, or heirs of those who had been robbed, were requested to describe the missing articles, which would, intimated the Archbishop, be returned to those who could justify their claim.

## THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

### ARTILLERY PRACTICE.



HAT the experience gained from manœuvres on the parade-ground is not of much value to our soldiers when they come to face a determined enemy in a rough, mountainous country has recently been abundantly proved, and a wise step has been taken by our military authorities in arranging for an artillery practice-ground on the heights of Dartmoor. This rough bit of Devonshire is associated in most persons' minds with a convict prison, but as a matter of fact the prison covers only a very small portion of one hundred and thirty thousand acres which are called Dartmoor. Here is an ideal place for testing guns, gunners, and horses. All will have to rough it, and will be subject to the same accidents that often befell our artillery in the distant Transvaal, save that the enemy will only be a make-believe one. In this wild moorland country elaborate ranges have been set up, with dummy men and dummy horses whose movements require the aid of no less than thirty miles of wire-rope. These dummies represent 'our friends the enemy,' and can be made to group themselves just as may be desired. Barrack accommodation for large bodies of men has been provided, and different batteries will visit the district for a stated time in each year.

### ELECTRIC TRAMWAYS.

Our tramway system in all large towns and cities is constantly being augmented, and parochial authorities are exercised in their minds as to the best method of propulsion to adopt. As it is somewhat difficult for them to obtain reliable guidance on this point, their attention may usefully be directed to a report recently issued by Mr H. Vreeland, President of the Metropolitan Street Railway Company of New York. He states in this report that the company are about to convert twenty-three miles of streets hitherto worked by cable to the electric underground (conduit) system.

The cable method has been at work for but a short period, and the change would only be justified by overwhelming advantages in favour of electricity. The principal reason for it is the question of cost of working, the cable system costing 17·99 cents per mile, as against only 12·99 cents for the electric method of working. Horse-traction comes out at 19·43 cents per mile, so that may be considered out of court entirely. The electric system has the additional advantage of giving a greater freedom from accident than the others, while breakdowns are less frequent. The figures given above would, doubtless, be modified by local circumstances; but they will be useful for reference.

### THE PROTECTION OF WILD BIRDS.

That there are two sides to every question, and that it is well to consider each before coming to a decision, is a truth which every one acknowledges but few act upon. For instance, there has been for some time a general outcry for the protection of wild birds, and dreary pictures have been drawn of a time which must come when the feathered songsters of our woods and lanes will disappear; but it seems certain that in some districts the wild birds are in such excess that their presence means serious loss rather than sentimental benefit. In a recent letter to the *Times*, the chairman of the Godstone Parish Council, in Surrey, complains that the birds in his neighbourhood simply swarm, and that if his currants, gooseberries, and cherries were not closely covered with nets he would not get a single dish of them for himself. The same with peas and strawberries. He tried every device in order to keep blackbirds and starlings from two large cherry-trees, and at last gave up the warfare and cut down the trees. Sparrows and finches rise from his fields in clouds of at least a thousand, and he recently took fifty-four sparrows from one haystack. He pleads that County Councils should have power to exercise a certain discretion as to the necessity for more or less protection

in particular parishes or places, and the evidence he adduces would seem to suggest that he has a good case.

#### YERBA MATÉ TEA.

Attention has recently been called to a beverage which is largely used in South American countries, where tea of the ordinary kind is scarce. This is made by infusion from the *yerba maté*, which is derived from the leaves of a tree that grows from twelve to twenty feet in height. The leaves are gathered every two or three years, dried over a slow fire, pounded in mortars, packed in fresh skins, and finally baked in the sun. The beverage is supposed to have extraordinary stimulating properties for those who have to undertake forced marches or other bodily exertion, and the French Government have ordered a shipment of *maté* for their colonial troops. Other samples are being procured by Germany, and there is an attempt to introduce the tea for domestic consumption in the United States. It is said that *maté* possesses all the virtues of ordinary tea, without affecting the nervous system; but its advocates do not all agree as to its merits, some affirming that coffee has proved to be more sustaining to troops in the field. It would be well if our own military authorities were to try the virtues of the new beverage, for the evidence at present to hand is of a general rather than scientific character.

#### SAFE EXPLOSIVES.

The employment of smokeless ammunition has made a great change in the conditions of warfare, a fact that has revealed itself again and again in the Transvaal; but it is not generally known that an element of safety has been introduced with the new agent of destruction which was entirely absent when our soldiers had to depend upon 'villainous saltpetre' for serving their guns. For example, the explosive cordite—so named because it is made, macaroni fashion, in strings or cords—burns harmlessly away unless it is confined in a closed vessel. Thus a man may use it in perfect safety as a pipe-light. This valuable quality of new explosive agents was demonstrated on a large scale a short time ago, when, in New York City, a case of fifty pounds of smokeless powder was ignited by lightning. It flared up, but there was no approach to anything in the shape of an explosion. It is needless to say that the firing of a like quantity of the old black gunpowder would have led to disastrous results, although the newer form of explosive is credited with four times its destructive power.

#### SILK FROM SPIDERS.

At the recent great Exhibition at Paris some silk-producing spiders were shown, and *Le Monde Illustré* published an account of the manner in which the spiders are reared in Madagascar for

the purposes of this curious industry. There have been many attempts in past years to turn the viscid threads from the spider's spinnerets to useful account; but in Madagascar there now exists a professional school where the matter is taken up seriously. The spiders are held in clips, each in a separate compartment of a vertical frame which roughly resembles a compositor's 'case.' The threads from the spinnerets of each spider are then conveyed to a twisting apparatus, which gathers twenty-four strands into one. As each spider becomes 'empty' it is taken out of its prison and replaced by a fresh one. In the article referred to the various operations necessary in procuring silk from these insects are well illustrated by photographs taken on the spot.

#### SEA-FISH HATCHERIES.

In spite of the old belief that there is as good fish in every sea as ever yet came out, it seems certain that our sea-fisheries in many cases are being depleted. Long ago it was found necessary to take steps to acquire a more thorough knowledge of fish-life, and with this view marine biological stations were established around the coast. These establishments were created, in the words of the late Professor Huxley, 'to increase our knowledge as regards the food, life-conditions, and habits of British food-fishes and molluscs.' Mr Garstang, of the Marine Laboratory at Plymouth, has lately issued a report bearing upon the work of these associations, in which he admits that past operations in sea-fish hatching have been unsatisfactory; and he does not look for any successful results until the problem of feeding and rearing the fry to a more advanced stage has been satisfactorily solved. He believes that the most useful measures to adopt would be to promote the artificial propagation of sea-fishes on board the fishing-boats during the spawning-season, fertilised eggs to be at once returned to the sea.

#### MODERN WORKSHOP APPLIANCES.

The question is often asked, 'How is it that America can beat Britain in several manufactures, seeing that the wages paid in the United States are so much in excess of those paid here?' The British Commercial Agent in Chicago, writing in the *Board of Trade Journal*, supplies an answer to the question. In the first place, the American workshops adopt machine-tools of the very latest pattern and labour-saving appliances which will turn out goods at a rapid rate and in large quantities. In one large works which he visited he found one man in charge of ten automatic machines, all working at the same time. In the same shop were fifty machine-tools working in charge of only five men; and it was not an unusual thing to see one man in charge of three or four ordinary lathes, placed in such a position that he could pay attention to each. At another



works visited he found that, owing to the perfection of the machines employed, and their almost automatic action, ordinary labourers were employed in place of skilled mechanics. The tools are better than those of British manufacture, and run at a far higher speed. It has often been alleged that the British workman resists the introduction of labour-saving machinery, and is averse to one man tending more than one machine. If this be true he is singularly blind to his own interests, for he is playing into the hands of formidable rivals. The various trades unions would do well to give this matter their serious consideration before it is too late.

#### WOOD PRESERVATION.

There are now a great number of processes by which wood can be so altered in character that it becomes almost fireproof, is no longer liable to dry-rot or any of the processes which come under the head of decay, and is generally improved. Unfortunately many of these systems have a disadvantage in the matter of expense or in the difficulty of working the material with ordinary tools, and so the inventions are neglected. The last process of the kind to bid for public favour is the Hasselmann system, which is being introduced by the Xylosote Company. Under this method the wood, after having its sap extracted by air-suction in a closed vessel, is charged with a solution containing certain metallic and mineral salts, the entire treatment occupying about four hours. It is said that green wood thus treated neither shrinks nor warps, thus obviating the seasoning generally necessary; and that soft woods become so hardened that they can be utilised for purposes for which they were quite unsuited in their original condition, and become almost incombustible and capable of receiving a high polish. The Hasselmann system has already been adopted by the Bavarian State Railways and Post-Office for the treatment of sleepers and telegraph poles; and the Swedish Government have ordered a large consignment of wooden sleepers treated by this process. We have no information as to the cost of the method or as to its effect upon the wood as regards the use of carpenters' tools.

#### EXPERIMENTAL PAVING.

The frequency with which the roadways of our large cities are 'up,' entailing great loss and inconvenience, testifies to the fact that we have not yet arrived at any satisfactory method of paving our streets. Asphalt, on the whole, seems to be one of the most durable methods; but it is, under certain atmospheric conditions, most treacherous to the poor horses. Other methods have recently been subjected to careful trial at Basel, and the United States Consul there gives the result of experiments in that town with various materials. Wood blocks cut from the common fir quickly wore out, even when specially treated, the lack

of sunlight in the narrow streets promoting its decay, while the sharp shoes of the horses hacked it to pieces. American pitch-pine is fairly satisfactory; but pine and oak were rejected as being both unsuitable and too costly. The dark-red Australian karri-wood, such as is used so extensively in our own country, took the palm from all others, and is found to last eighteen years, as against ten for pitch-pine, nine for larch, and five to seven for local fir. A quartz sandstone, cut and carefully dressed into blocks, laid close together, was found to be almost as noiseless as wood, less costly, and to have a life of thirty years. This particular stone comes from Alsace.

#### MOTOR-CAR EXPLOITS.

Although many accidents have ushered in the increasing popularity of the motor-car, all who have had a near acquaintance with this new kind of carriage will fain admit that, in the elimination of the nervous and spirited horse, it offers a measure of safety hitherto impossible with vehicular traffic. In order to show under what perfect control these motor-cars can be operated, the driver of one of them at a tournament at Chicago volunteered an extraordinary demonstration. He drove the carriage on a see-saw roadway, working it backwards and forwards from the balancing-point so that the road was kept rocking. Another successful feat was to place an egg against an obstruction on the road and to urge the wheel of the autocar against it so as to crack but not crush it. Finally, the vehicle was driven up an inclined plane with a gradient of 3 in 10. It is also interesting to note that wonders are being done by trick-riders on these vehicles at various places of entertainment; thus a German juggler steers one round the ring with his feet while he is busily engaged with his hands in tossing balls, bottles, &c., into the air.

#### NOTKIN'S AËRO-GAS FOUNTAINS.

This is a patented apparatus for providing a supply of gas for public or private lighting, light-houses, buoys, and beacons, as well as for gas-engines and for heating and cooking purposes. The so-called fountain consists of a metallic vessel filled with a porous material, which is charged from time to time with a light hydrocarbon, such as gasoline or petrol. Air enters at an upper orifice, takes up the hydrocarbon vapour, and becoming heavier, gravitates through the absorbent, and issues from a lower orifice to be used for lighting, heating, or power as the case may be. The apparatus is exquisitely simple, and its efficiency undoubted, so that the first question naturally asked is as to cost of working. Upon this point we have addressed an inquiry to the engineer of the syndicate which has been formed to work the patent, and he informs us that, with the hydrocarbon at one shilling and sixpence per gallon, the cost of the gas may be taken at four

shillings and twopence per thousand feet; while at one shilling per gallon, the cost would be two shillings and ninepence per thousand feet. The aëro-gas is used in conjunction with Argand burners; but we suppose that it could with equal ease, and possibly better economy, be employed with the incandescent mantle. The invention seems to be well adapted for use in remote country districts where gasworks are conspicuous by their absence or by the necessarily high price of their gas.

#### A COMPLIMENT TO BRITISH ENGINEERS.

When we hear of big engineering contracts going abroad, it is well to look at the other side of the question. Mr Burnley, in his article on 'Industrial Supremacy' in last month's *Chambers*, touched on this point. In the last edition of *The Steam-Engine, and Gas and Oil Engines*, by John Perry, Professor of Mechanics and Mathematics in the Royal College of Science, there is a footnote containing a distinct compliment to British engineers. Professor Perry says they deserve their success. Their work is tested not merely by an appearance of goodness, such as a fraudulent plumber is quite able to give to the worst of jobs. Good work, he tells us, is the result of honest, earnest effort, herein exercised to such good purpose. Users of the Willans engines have told him that they will run for many months continually with no other care than proper lubrication. An engine

opened at Kensington after a twenty-one months' run was found not only to need no renewal of any part, but no sign of wear could be detected anywhere, and the engine was started without anything being done to it. 'Surely,' says Professor Perry, 'this reputation of English engineering is worth maintaining. It may be in the power of foreigners to obtain more orders for ships and engines, but it is our boast that when work is ordered it is well done.' Long may this continue to be the case.

#### SUICIDE STATISTICS.

'Suicide in consequence of temporary insanity' is such a common formula of the coroner's court inquiry that anything which will throw light upon this somewhat gruesome subject has a fascinating interest attached to it. Professor Goldwin Smith of Toronto has recently been giving his views upon the frequency of self-destruction, which he attributes to higher civilisation and sensibility. Suicides among military men he notes to be curiously frequent, attributing them to the oppressiveness and monotony of drill, and possibly to the vices of barrack life; but he seems to omit the all-important fact of ready facilities and familiarity with weapons of destruction. Statistics go far to show that marriage has a tendency to counteract suicide, while divorce adds materially to the number of its victims.

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CHRISTMAS 1900.

## FOR THE SAKE OF A KISS.

A TALE OF THE SIEGE OF PARIS.

By ANDREW W. ARNOLD,

AUTHOR OF 'THE ATTACK ON THE FARM,' ETC.

### CHAPTER I.



WHEN the *réveille* rang out sharp and clear on the 21st of December, and I woke and saw above me, by the light of a dim lantern, the smutty girders of the engine-shed where we had passed the night, and not far off a cuirassed locomotive like some grimy goblin in the semi-darkness, I thought at first that I must still be dreaming. Then I remembered the events of the previous day: how we Mobiles of the Seine-Inférieure, who were quartered to the west of Paris near Boulogne, had received orders to march up to St Denis, and how we, grumbling and swearing at our fate, had arrived there the night before.

'Wake up, you sluggards,' cried Sergeant Mordoni, coming along with a lantern; 'wake up, I say. I guess some of you won't have the chance to-morrow.'

*Ma foi*, how we all hated that man! I never met any one who had a more fiendish disposition, though I will admit that we all had a certain admiration for the little brute. He had been in the Zouaves, and he wore on his breast the Crimean and Italian medals. If mere courage had been the only requisite, he must

have had a commission long ago; but there was something against him which none of us could find out. Some said he had made love to an officer's wife, which was very likely; for he was extremely handsome, and he had such insinuating manners and was such an accomplished liar that women adored him, and fell easy victims to his wiles. I can see him now strutting off, twisting his ferocious moustache and puffing out his chest, on those rare occasions when he got leave to go within the fortifications to spend the money which many of us conscripts found it worth our while to give him, for he soon made our lives a burden to us if we did not.

I had at first furnished him with many a five-franc piece; but I had no longer any need to do so, as I was a corporal. During the night attack on L'Hay on the 1st of December (which was merely a feint to keep the Prussians in their positions whilst Ducrot was getting his men over the Marne for the great sortie against Champigny on the 2nd), I had rescued Captain Lebedoyere, who commanded my company, and had been promoted, so that the little sergeant had not so much power over me.

Stiff and numbed by the extreme cold, I roused myself and looked around me. Still sleeping peacefully by my side, I saw my comrade Claude Lefebvre. Poor fellow! I could



hardly bring myself to wake him, for bronchitis had kept him awake the greater part of the night. I had begged him the previous day to go into the hospital, and he would have done so; but then the order came for us to march, and, in spite of my remonstrances, he had not the moral courage to stay behind, as he feared it would look like shamming, now that we were going under fire.

It was perfectly dark outside; and as the men sat shivering round partaking of their *café* they bitterly cursed those who were sending us on what they considered a fool's errand, which they felt certain would end in disaster. Though I did not believe that we should meet with any success, I rather looked forward to this sortie, as it might give me a further opportunity of distinguishing myself.

Four years ago I had wished to marry a very charming and lovely girl named Lucienne Colmart. My family would not agree to the marriage, as they did not think her *dot* was large enough. I was studying for the Bar at the Sorbonne then. However, I was determined not to give up Lucienne, and I worked hard, resolving by my own exertions to rise in my profession, and marry her when I could afford to do so; for after I was twenty-five, by our law, I could marry as I liked; no *conseil de famille* could then prevent me. But, alas! she died two years ago, and I felt from that time that I had nothing more to live for. I became savage and reckless, brooding over my misfortune one moment, and flying into dissipation the next in order to make me forget it. So, while my comrades sat growling over their *café*, I remained silent and absorbed in my own reflections.

'It is no good your grumbling, *mes enfants*; it's all in Trochu's plan,' remarked the sergeant, with a twinkle in his bright, little, cunning Italian eyes. Trochu's grand 'plan' was now a byword; and the sergeant knew, though we were cowed and frozen, that any allusion to it would bring on a heated discussion.

'I have got a plan too,' said Grenier; 'and that would be to make those scribblers who are now in their beds, and who spend their time guzzling and drinking absinthe in warm *cafés* while we are getting frozen to death, just march in front of us. I reckon that would cool them a little, and put some sense into their heads.'

'Yes,' observed Beldart, 'and some of those windbags at Belleville too; a dose of Prussian lead would do them good.'

'Ah, *mes moutons*!' said Mordoni, with a fiendish chuckle, 'you don't like going into the *abattoir*—*hein*? Well, it's soon over. The Prussian'—

As he spoke the 'assembly' sounded; and, strapping on our knapsacks, we ran out into a yard, where we found our colonel on his dappled grey awaiting us. When the roll was

called it was found that a few were missing, some having taken advantage of our new *locale* to desert. In our old quarters this was not an easy thing to do, as it was extremely difficult to get permission to go within the fortifications; but in a large place like St Denis it was not so difficult. It was reported that a poor fellow on sentry duty, who did not answer to his name, had been found bolt upright, frozen to death at his post. This was not the first fatality from that cause, and the occurrence did not tend to raise our spirits.

It must have been about eight o'clock when an aide-de-camp arrived.

'Fours. By your right; march!' shouted our commander.

One naturally expected the *tambours* to strike up; but all was silent.

'We are going to surprise them,' said the sergeant; and so it proved.

We soon found ourselves in what appeared to be the main street, not far from the Abbey; and our progress for a time was delayed by the terrible confusion which reigned there. Ambulances, that should have been in the rear, were all mixed up with the artillery and ammunition-wagons. In the midst of the turmoil, whilst surgeons and drivers were swearing on every side, General Vinoy and his *état-major* rode up; and Mordoni pointed out Admiral de la Roncière, General La Vognet, and others. I recognised General Dumoulin, who commanded our brigade. The 10th, 12th, 13th, and 14th battalions of the Mobiles of the Seine, as well as some of the National Guard of St Denis, took part in the operations which were to follow; but to this day I am not certain what regiments were included in our brigade.

A signal-gun boomed out, and by going down a by-street we soon got into the open fields. The fog was so dense that we could not see fifty metres in front of us, but we knew we were going in the direction of Le Bourget. We had with us two naval officers from Fort St Denis (which was manned by sailors) who knew the ground well. They had taken part in the fight at Le Bourget when it was attacked and taken by the Prussian Guard on the 28th of October. Our company was on the extreme left of the battalion, and I was on the left of my section.

'What earthly good shall we gain by taking that infernal place?' remarked Grenier.

'Stop that talking there,' said the sergeant sharply, in a loud whisper; and in grim silence we went on through the mist at the double. There was no mistake now about what Mordoni had said of our intending to take the village by surprise, for not a shot had been fired from the forts to cover our advance. On and on we went over the frozen fields, when suddenly a harsh voice shouted through the fog, 'Halt! Werda?'

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No answer was returned. Nothing broke the stillness but the patter of our feet on the crisp snow and the rattle of the cartridges in their gibernes. Then, not a hundred metres in front of us, we saw half-a-dozen bright flashes; and Beldart, who was close to me, was hit, and a man behind him fell to the ground. The effect of the shot on the former was extraordinary, and I could not have believed the result if I had not seen it, for he sprang into the air without uttering a cry, rushed forward, then, turning like a rabbit, ran into the midst of us and made his way to the rear. He was hit slightly on the elbow; and he told me afterwards that he felt as if he had received an electric shock, and for the time being did not know what he was about.

'*En avant, mes enfants* ; but don't fire,' said our captain in a low tone.

At this juncture we saw our colonel suddenly pull up his horse, and then canter away to the right. It was evident he perceived something that was not visible to us. This caused some confusion, as some naturally followed him. Even Captain Lebedoyère seemed undecided; but the old sergeant was not deceived. 'Bah!' he muttered, 'it's only a wall;' and, taking our cue from him, we kept straight on, and soon found he was right. As we scrambled over this obstacle which enclosed the little garden of the cottage, in which the Prussian *feldwacht* was located, we received another volley from them ere they retreated from the house on their supports. The *piket* or *repli*, with the Germans, was the remainder of the company that furnished the advanced posts; it was established in the rear, but somewhat on the flank, so as not to be in the way if the *feldwacht* had to retreat.

Thus it happened that, owing to Mordoni's prescience, our company was really the first to reach the cottage. I was well in front with my squad, and as we followed the Prussians the colonel came galloping up. I chanced to be nearest him when he did so; and, seeing me well in advance, he remembered it afterwards. To the right we suddenly heard the rattle of musketry, which showed that some other regiment had also come to close-quarters with our foes; and immediately afterwards the shells came whistling over our heads from the fortress of St Denis, and the fire was taken up by the Forts de l'Est and Aubervilliers. Silence was now no longer necessary, so the drums beat the *pas de charge*; and, excited by their stirring rattle, we wretched, half-starved Mobiles forgot our troubles, and like hounds followed on the track of the retreating Germans, who, taken completely by surprise, fled before us. So we drove them with little loss through some gardens and houses towards the village.

'*Allons, mes braves!*' shouted Mordoni, his 1900.]

bright eyes glistening with excitement; 'follow them up.' Thoroughly roused and elated, and perhaps surprised, at our success, we needed no encouragement, and soon we saw Le Bourget itself in front of us. We had got to the bottom of the main street near the church, and were fighting our way into the houses, from which the Prussians poured a murderous fire into us, when, as I was trying to smash in a door with the butt-end of my rifle, a shell fell on the roof of the house, sending down a shower of tiles, one of which struck me on the head, and I remembered nothing more.

When I came to my senses I was so stiff with the cold and my head was so confused that at first I could hardly move. A comrade was groaning near me, and another lying on his face in the middle of the street, the snow around him dyed with blood. I sat and stared at these poor fellows; but the mental effort to recollect who they were was too great, and I sank to the ground again. Then I remembered I had a flask of cognac, and after a draught I felt stronger, and began to tie a handkerchief round my forehead. I had hardly done so when I heard a rush of feet, and the next moment Grenier was stooping over me.

'Come on, *caporal*,' he shouted; 'it's all up. The devils will be on us in a moment.'

With his assistance I got on to my legs, and, holding his arm, staggered on after a whole troop of panic-stricken Mobiles running towards Corneneuf. My head was in a whirl. I knew not what I was doing; my only idea was to get out of danger.

'I thought you were done for when I saw you fall,' he exclaimed as we hurried along, and then he went on to speak of the glass-factory, the cemetery, and the gas-works; but his remarks were mere words to me, as my mind was too confused to follow his explanations.

'Leave me,' I said when we had got some distance; 'I can keep up no longer.' The exertion had reopened the wound, and I could feel the warm blood trickling down my neck.

'Well, just come this way, then,' he said; and going down a lane, I got into a field at the bottom of a garden near the entrance of the village of Corneneuf, where he placed me against a wall. I reckon it was about eleven then. The shells from the fort that covered our retreat went hurtling and shrieking across the leaden sky overhead, and an intermittent rifle-fire still continued, and I seemed to hear them as I lay. After that I must have fainted from loss of blood; for when I came to my senses the sun on that the shortest day of the year was setting over Clichy, and but for an occasional boom from Fort Valérien all was still. It was bitterly cold, and the wonder is



I was not frozen to death as our poor sentry had been the previous night.

I determined, after drinking some of the raw spirit in my flask, to make an effort to reach the village. I had not gone far when whom should I see lying on the ground with his arm bound up but Claude Lefebvre. I loved the young fellow; he was so good-hearted, so gentle, and withal so clever. Even with the roughest and most brutal among us he was a favourite.

Lefebvre and I had been a short time fellow-students at the Sorbonne, though I cannot say I saw very much of him in those days, as he came after the death of my *fiancée*. I was rich, and he was poor. We mixed in very different sets: I among the wildest, and he among the most studious. Besides this, he did not complete his course, as his father, a small country attorney, died, and he had to get his living, and help to provide for his mother and younger brothers. He was always fond of art, and the proprietor of a large wall-paper manufactory, recognising his abilities, took him for a designer. In fact, so highly did Lefebvre's employer think of him that, just before the war broke out, he allowed Lefebvre to become betrothed to his daughter, although Claude had nothing but his ability to rely on. I had quite lost sight of him till the war commenced; then, to our mutual surprise, we found ourselves drafted into the same regiment, and in the same squad, and our early friendship was renewed.

I feared when I first saw him, so pallid was his face, that he was dead; but on hearing my voice he looked up. The spirit I poured down his throat revived him a little, and with some difficulty I got him as far as Corneneuf. I wonder now how I found the strength to do so, but in helping him I forgot my own troubles.

'I can't go any farther, my dear fellow,' he said softly. 'It's not the wound; but I cannot get my breath. Oh, *mon Dieu!*' he gasped, 'it's a shame to have brought us up here.'

As the poor fellow was speaking I saw through the deepening gloom a number of men round some object in a field in front of us, which I soon perceived was the carcass of a horse that they were hacking to pieces and carrying into a cottage near.

With a mighty effort I succeeded in half-leading, half-carrying my dying comrade into the little house. Those inside had broken up a door and were cooking the reeking flesh on their bayonets. For the most part they eyed us like snarling dogs with a bone; but finding that we wanted no place by the fire, nor any of their food, they paid no further attention to us. Passing into an inner room, I placed Lefebvre gently on the bare boards. I could tell by his laboured breathing that the end was near, and

I wiped the moisture from my eyes as I thought of his mother and his *fiancée*; he was always speaking of the latter, and I had often seen her photograph. I was oppressed, too, by the knowledge that nothing I was able to do could save him. The vile oaths of our starving comrades, as they gorged themselves and quarrelled over their horrible meal, angered and annoyed me; but Claude was unaffected by their noise; he, alas! was too far gone for that, and had sunk into a sort of coma. I expected every moment that the pulse I held would cease to beat. Just, however, at the last he rallied for a moment, and with an effort signified he had something to say.

'Jean,' he murmured faintly as I bent down beside him, 'there's a letter for Elise in my pocket. Make sure she gets it. Tell Hubert and Jacques to be good lads, and take care of mother. Tell her,' he continued with a tremulous voice, 'not to mind, and say that we shall meet'—— But he broke down here entirely. I could not be certain of his last words, but they sounded like 'in heaven.' Then the death-rattle commenced, and after a few moments of agony he fell back in my arms a corpse. Taking the letter and some trinkets from his pocket, sick at heart I went out into the cold night, for I could not bear to stay in that horrible place any longer, haunted as I was by his dying words and the ribald jokes of the brutes in the other room.

As I was going into the village I passed a small group of German prisoners waiting to be sent into Paris, where their arrival might soften, perhaps, the failure of our useless sortie. They were splendid men, with E. R. (Elizabethan Regiment of the Guard) on their shoulder-straps. As they stood there, speaking a barbarous tongue and moodily smoking their great china pipes, they looked like grim giants compared with the little *liguards* who were guarding them. I regarded these German soldiers with interest, for I had never been able to observe them before at my leisure; but it was so cold that I soon went on to the first *café* in sight. There I found two men, Ravol and Perraud, belonging to my regiment. Both of them were *mauvais sujets*, and the latter was already half-drunk. They had with them two bundles of clothes, and I guessed at once they were going to desert.

'Hullo, *caporal*,' they said, 'where have you been?'

'With poor Lefebvre.'

'Ah! that's how it is, then, that you have missed our fellows; they left for our old quarters nearly an hour ago, and you had better follow as soon as you can, for the chances are you will be made sergeant now Mordoni's done for.'

'Is Mordoni dead?'

'Yes,' replied Ravol; 'and a precious good  
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thing, too. Do you know this?' he continued, producing a heavy purse which I recognised as belonging to the late sergeant.

'How did it happen?' I asked.

'Well, we were up by the glass-factory, and he was climbing over a low wall, and I was close behind him. 'Come on,' he shouted; but just then I heard the whiz of a shell. Thinking the confounded thing was going to fall on me, I crouched down, and it took his head clean off and burst in a field beyond.'

'I am hardly likely to get his place,' I said. 'Bonnet and Marly are my seniors.'

'Bonnet got a bullet in his ankle, and I saw the other on the ground.'

I quite understood their anxiety to get rid of me; but their wishes coincided with my own. I longed to be promoted, as it would give me far greater liberty.

On my paying outrageously for it, the landlord had given me a little rice and also some bread; so, fortified by this and a bottle of wine, I set off for Boulogne.

I took my bearings by the electric light, which I could distinguish through the fog as it shone from the Fort de l'Esté. The road was like iron, and my fingers tingled with the bitter cold. I had crossed the rail and got on to the Neuilly road—for it was out of the question at that time to enter the city—when I fell in with a soldier driving an empty ammunition-cart. For a franc, the man, who appeared either drunk or half-asleep—at least so it seemed to me—agreed to give me a lift; so, getting inside, I made myself as comfortable as I could. We must have gone a good distance, when suddenly we came into collision with some permanent structure, and I was very nearly pitched out.

'Where on earth are you driving?' I exclaimed ruefully as soon as I could collect my scattered senses. But no answer came to my question. It was very dark and foggy, and impossible to see a metre in front. On getting down I found we had broken a wheel by running against a demolished wall.

'What's the good of sitting there?' I shouted angrily to the driver as he remained on the box. Still he did not answer; and going nearer and after striking a match, I was horrified by his fixed, ghastly stare, for I realised then that the poor wretch had been frozen to death. The reins hung loosely in one hand, while he still grasped the coin I had given him in the other. Fearing the horse might share its master's fate, I cut the traces, and, filled with a horrible dread—for I was haunted by the man's white face—hurried away I knew not where.

Never in all my life do I remember such intense cold. The journal of an aide-de-camp states: 'La nuit fut terrible; je ne me souviens pas d'avoir eu aussi froid que dans les galopades qui me furent imposées le soir. Les hommes 1900.]

gelaient littéralement dans les tranchées.' As a child I had heard my grandfather speak of the retreat from Moscow, when men killed the horses and got inside them for warmth; but I could imagine nothing worse than I now experienced. With hands and feet benumbed with cold, and devoid of all feeling, I staggered over the frozen snow. To add to my difficulties, I had not the least idea where I was going, and I bitterly blamed myself for not remaining in the *café*. I thought of poor Lefebvre, and wondered if I was destined soon to join him. At all costs, as long as my strength remained, I determined to keep moving, though more than once a sleepy feeling came over me, and I felt inclined to lie down on the snow and let death come and end my sufferings.

On and on I went, feeling every moment I was getting weaker. Once through the stillness I thought I heard some voices, and called out; but there was no reply to my shouts. Then I found myself stumbling over the stumps of some trees. They were so numerous that it occurred to me—and as it happened I was right—that I was in what had formerly been the Bois de Boulogne. This thought gave me fresh hope, and I made to the left to avoid the river and to reach our trenches; but in the utter darkness I think I must have kept going round in a circle. I felt I could not go on much longer. I was filled with an overpowering feeling of despair, when suddenly close to me I saw a gleam of light shining through the chink of a shutter. Feeling the walls, I came to a door, against which I knocked as loudly as the little strength I had remaining permitted. There was a stir inside, and in another moment a grille in the door was opened.

'Who are you? What do you want?' asked a soft contralto voice.

'My name is Jean Aymard,' I replied. 'I am wounded, and I've lost my way. For heaven's sake let me in, or tell me where I am!'

'Poor wretch!' I heard another girl whisper. 'He cannot be a mere soldier; I am certain of that by his voice. Perhaps, Lola, he's an officer. Father, may we let him in?'

'Yes,' replied a deep voice. 'It's enough to kill a dog out there.'

The bolts were drawn, and staggering in, I found myself in a small kitchen. The younger girl gave a cry as she saw me, and no wonder, for I must have appeared a terrible object. I had got some of the blood off my face in the *café*, but the bandages were soaked, and I was covered with snow and dirt. I was so dazzled and confused by the light, poor as it really was, that I could not at first see at all; but as I got accustomed to it I saw a handsome, white-haired old man seated on a sofa, with a couple of crutches beside him, and on a table within easy reach was a revolver. Though faint and dizzy, I was struck at once by the extreme beauty of

his daughters, more especially that of the elder, who appeared about nineteen. I was in no state to reason; but as I gazed at the splendid figures of the two girls, and their dark hair and fine eyes, their faces somehow seemed strangely familiar to me.

'Run and get some food, Marie,' said the father rather sharply to the younger of the two; 'the poor devil is half-frozen. He will be all right when he has had something to eat.'

I fear I ate like a wolf, and it was not until I had nearly finished the pile of rice and potatoes they set before me that the thought suddenly occurred to me that perhaps my kind benefactors had not enough for themselves.

'No, no!' I exclaimed, pushing the plate away. 'I can't take your food from you in this way. You have given me shelter, and that's enough.'

'Don't let that trouble you, my good fellow,' observed the old officer, for such I found him to be. 'We have plenty of what we have given you; it's meat we want.' But for all that I did not feel comfortable, and left the remainder till the next day.

'Now, I'll bathe your forehead,' said the elder sister.

I was so overcome by their kindness, and the beautiful girl seemed so like some ministering angel, that I could hardly keep the tears of gratitude from my eyes, and I should have liked to have kissed the little hands that tied the bandages so tenderly.

Under the comfortable influence of my new surroundings I soon felt better, and my host began to question me eagerly about the day's operations, showing a knowledge that soon convinced me that he was, as I already suspected, himself a soldier. Meanwhile the two girls had taken their places opposite to me, and I found it difficult to take my eyes off them, for I was becoming more and more certain that I had seen them before.

'Tell me,' at last I asked, 'where am I, and to whom am I indebted for all this kindness?'

'Father is Colonel Courtois,' replied the elder sister.

The mystery was clear now. I understood everything.

'Ah!' I exclaimed, 'then I am in *La Maisonnette*, and you are *La Belle Hélène*?'

'*La Belle Hélène*?' she replied, with a puzzled look, and the little room rang with her silvery laugh, in which her sister joined. 'Whoever can have told you that? *Ma foi*, no! my name is Lola, and my sister's is Marie.'

'Well, anyway, that is what we soldiers call you,' I answered, 'for I must tell you that I belong to the regiment of Mobiles that occupies the houses and trenches behind your house; and I can assure you, mademoiselle,' I continued, with a smile, 'that I have often watched you and your sister through the loopholed walls with a field-glass I bought on purpose.'

## CHAPTER II.



It is necessary that I should explain how it was that the old colonel should have been allowed to occupy a house standing directly between our advanced posts and those of the Prussians, when all the others had been pulled down. The villa was, it is true, of no strategical value, lying as it did in a slight hollow, and consequently not interfering with the fire of either the battery to the south-east of the Bois de Boulogne to the right or the one at Billeancourt behind it to the left, both of which covered the Pont de Sèvres; but this would not have been sufficient to prevent the demolition of the little house had there not been very peculiar extraneous circumstances.

In the Mexican campaign Colonel Courtois had the misfortune to lose both his legs, and it happened that a similar piece of bad luck happened to another officer of the same grade. The latter, though he had not rendered anything like the same services to his country as Colonel Courtois, who had served with distinction in the Crimea and in Italy, through court influence received an extra pension and was made a brevet-general. These honours falling to the share of his Mexican comrade, while he was put on the retired list without even being mentioned in the despatches, filled the colonel with disgust. I will not deny that he had not his idiosyncrasies, and that he was naturally very hot-tempered. He took violent likes and dislikes, and his enemies—who were not few, for he had a sharp tongue and a venomous pen—insinuated that mentally he was a little deranged, though I never heard of any one who had the courage to tell him this to his face. Embittered by his misfortunes, he turned a violent Republican. From his little villa at Boulogne he wrote violent articles against the Government, and his house soon became the rendezvous of those who were equally discontented. It was matter of surprise that he, like many others, was not sent across the frontier. In spite of all that was said, he was really no fool, and he never wrote or spoke on any subject that he had not thoroughly mastered. The state of the army was a favourite topic with him, and it was some able articles he wrote on that subject that led to his becoming an intimate friend of General Trochu, who, as all the world knows, had written on the same topic. Thus it came to pass that when, after Sedan, the already tottering imperial dynasty was overthrown and Trochu made Governor of Paris, the colonel was enabled to remain where he was.

Our regiment occupied the houses and trenches immediately opposite the park of St Cloud, to the right of the Pont de Sèvres, which was not

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entirely destroyed, for it was at this point that the *parlementaires* were held, each end respectively being carefully barricaded and guarded by ourselves and the Germans. The river, of course, ran between us, making the neutral ground between the *avant postes* about six hundred metres.

The colonel's property, which faced the loop-holed walls of the park, behind which the Germans kept incessant watch, was about midway between us; but the villa itself was considerably nearer to them than to us—in fact, hardly two hundred metres. Needless to say, among us soldiers there were wonderful tales about the eccentric old soldier. It was reported that he had hoards of food, enough to last him a year, and some said gold too; and that it was owing to his fabulous wealth that he enjoyed the unique satisfaction of being allowed to remain. More than once I had heard it proposed that we should go to the villa one dark night *en masse* and take what we could; and it was only the fear of the old officer's influential friends that prevented some of our half-famished men from doing so. One evening General Vinoy himself paid the colonel a visit, and our own colonel sometimes went to see him; but otherwise the family were entirely isolated.

What was most extraordinary—and this we Mobiles were often puzzled over—was the fact that the Prussians should have respected the house and those who were in it. This naturally gave rise to all manner of tales. It was said that at the commencement of the siege a young Prince who had seen one of the girls fishing was so surprised and captivated by her beauty that he had fallen madly in love with her. I learnt from the girls afterwards that there was some truth in this story; for one day soon after our troops were driven in on 18th September at Bagneux, some German officers had actually seen the old colonel seated in his wheeled chair on the river-bank, with his daughters, coolly fishing, and had watched them through their glasses. I reckon, however, if the house had interfered at all with the fire of one of their batteries, the Prussians would not have allowed any sentiment to prevent them knocking it to pieces.

Like two cats, we French and Germans watched each other without ceasing. The glimpse of a *pickelhaube* drew the fire of half-a-dozen chassepots; and if, for amusement, we placed a shako on a bayonet just above a wall, it was not long ere the large bullets of a needle-gun went through it, for the Germans, like ourselves, by continual practice, got to be really splendid marksmen. Yet sometimes, when all was comparatively quiet, the colonel's daughters, tired, I suppose, of keeping in their own walled garden, would actually come out and walk about between us. I was in the guard-room the first time I heard of their doing this, and could not believe it till I saw them strolling about as  
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coolly as if they were in the Champs Elysées. A halo of romance from that time appeared to hover over these two beautiful, fearless creatures. Safe in their womanhood, they seemed to think no harm could possibly come to them. We French were naturally proud of them; their courage flattered our *amour propre*; and as our enemies respected them, not a shot was fired by either side while they were in sight.

It was not astonishing, in these circumstances, that I should have felt surprised and delighted at finding myself actually in the presence of the two girls whose beauty I had so often admired at a distance, and which on a nearer inspection I found was even more striking than I, in my most fervent moments, had ever imagined.

'Now,' said my host, 'you take that sofa under the window, which I use in the daytime when I read.' He threw me a great bearskin rug, and I wrapped myself in it and was soon asleep.

When I awoke the next day it must have been near eleven. Stepping very lightly, I saw in the dim light—for they had not drawn the curtains—Lola arranging the table for *déjeuner*. Without moving my position, with half-closed eyes I followed the movements of the unconscious girl. It seemed as if my dear Lucienne had come to earth again, for Lola had the same graceful figure. Her hair, coiled in thick masses on her small, shapely head, was certainly darker, for it had the blue-blackness of a raven's wing. There was, however, in her dark-blue eyes a touch of sadness, which, though it etherealised her beauty, seemed in one so young almost unnatural, and contrasted forcibly with the small, full mouth that seemed to be made only for smiles and laughter.

She had just finished her duties when her father and sister came in, and after they had congratulated me on my improved appearance, we all sat down to our frugal *déjeuner*. I soon felt at my ease, and it was not long before they got all my story from me. I showed them the miniature of my poor Lucienne, which I always wore round my neck; and both Marie and the colonel were struck by the remarkable resemblance it bore to Mademoiselle Courtois.

Though I was very much better, I still felt weak and heavy.

'You are not fit for duty yet,' remarked my host. 'You had better stay with us to-day; and besides,' he added, 'it will be a kindness, as this life is terribly monotonous for the girls; it is something for them to have any one to talk to. I wish now that I had insisted on their going into Paris; but you know how obstinate women are.'

'When they think they are in the right,' I answered—'which,' I added dryly, turning to Mademoiselle Lola, 'I have sometimes known them to be.'

'Now, you have just spoilt your remark by





'Oh, I am sure of that,' I said, with a dry laugh. 'If, mademoiselle, I can only get into Paris I will order some pocket-handkerchiefs for you.'

But the colonel stopped this badinage, and turning to me, he said seriously, 'Aymard, for a day or two you will not be fit for duty. Now, I have got a commission for you. I want you to take this letter to your colonel. He will then, I am sure, give you leave to go into Paris, where I wish you to take a note to General Schmitz, chief of the staff of my friend Trochu. You will receive a communication from Schmitz, which I wish you to take to a Monsieur Jacques Lortier; and my daughter will also give you a letter to him. The nights are dark now, and I am sure you will not mind the risk of coming to let us know how you have succeeded. You will knock three times very quickly, and we will open the door at once.'

I was highly pleased at receiving these commissions, as it would give me the opportunity of seeing Lola again—for needless to state her radiant beauty had quite won my heart—and afforded me the chance of repaying in a small way the debt I owed the family for, probably, saving my life.

'And, M. Aymard,' said Lola, with a certain tremor in her voice, 'I too have a letter I wish you to take to Jacques Lortier. He is, I must tell you,' she added, with a blush, 'my *fiancé*, and the son of the great Doctor Lortier. You will not find him at his father's house, but in the Rue École de Médecine, for he is still a student; he may not even be there, for I have not heard from him for two months, and in his last letter he said he would perhaps have to look after the wounded.'

Now, it would have been a very extraordinary thing if a girl so lovely and so charming in every way had not had a *fiancé*; but for all that, her words came upon me as a thunder-clap. Somehow I felt a horrible sinking within me.

'Your *fiancé*, mademoiselle!' I exclaimed, trying to hide the bitterness that I felt so keenly.

'Yes,' she replied, evading my glance; 'we were betrothed before I left school. My mother arranged it all.'

She spoke in such a calm, matter-of-fact tone, as if the whole affair was a mere matter of business, that I regarded her with astonishment; for I had seen enough of her to know that she was naturally a girl with a warm heart and a trusting disposition. I had remarked how, in spite of her natural gaiety, a look of care and anxiety had often flitted across her noble face when she thought she was unobserved; but I had put this down to the peculiar circumstances in which she was placed. I felt now there was perhaps another key to the enigma.

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'Yes,' said her father, and there was a gleam in his eyes as he spoke, from which I must admit I derived a good deal of comfort, 'and you can tell Lortier that I should very much like to see him. The'—— but a warning glance from Lola made the irate old officer desist. Taking up his crutches, he went and dashed off a note; and the expression on his face as he did so caused me to think that the recipient of it would not derive much pleasure from the contents.

It was about ten o'clock when we all went to the end of the long garden, and after thanking the old officer and his daughters again and again for their kindness, I placed a ladder against the wall. I ascended it cautiously and waved a handkerchief. My signal was soon answered.

'Oh, M. Aymard,' cried Marie as I was about to let myself down, 'if you think of it, do get some fishing-tackle. The weather may break, and I am so tired of rice and potatoes.'

'All right, mademoiselle,' I answered, with a laugh, and the next moment I alighted on the ground. I had got half-way ere I was perceived by the Prussians; but the distance was too far for their needle-guns, and all their bullets went astray.

I was warmly welcomed by my comrades. I hardly knew till then how many friends I had. I had been reported among the killed or missing, and Grenier had taken my duties as corporal; but I found Mordoni's place had not been filled up, and, to my great satisfaction, it was given to me. Since I had rescued my captain at L'Hay he had been more like a brother to me than an officer. I took the earliest opportunity to tell him everything that had occurred. He told me if I liked he would give me an order to go into hospital; but, though still rather weak, I did not wish to do that, so he took me to the colonel, to whom I presented Colonel Courtois's letter, and he at once gave me permission to go into Paris.

'The old fellow likes you,' said Lebedoyère as we left. 'When I reported that you were missing he regretted it, as he said he had seen for himself that you were well in the front the other day. But, I say,' he continued, 'you are in luck's way, it seems to me, in making the acquaintance of Colonel Courtois, for mademoiselle is a girl in a thousand. From what you have told me, I know I should have no scruple in making love to her, for that medical student must be an arrant coward never to have even tried to see her.'

'Well, *mon capitaine*,' I replied, 'I shall soon have the chance of judging his character;' and hurrying off, I quickly found myself within the fortifications. I had not forgotten poor Lefebvre's dying wishes, and I made it my first duty to send his letter to his mother and *fiancée*. Then I went down to the Tuileries, where General

Trochu had his headquarters. There, with many others, I had to wait a long time. I did not see General Schmitz, but an aide-de-camp brought me a sealed letter for the colonel, and also an open one.

'General Schmitz,' he said, 'wishes me to say that he cannot make out the name of the person for whom Colonel Courtois desires the pass, so it is left blank, and the officer in command at the *avant postes* must sign it.'

Hastening off, I went to the address given me in the Rue École de Médecine, when, to my disgust, I found that Lortier was not there, as he was looking after the wounded at the Théâtre Française, which is not a stone's-throw from the Tuileries. Passing through the grand *foyer*, which was filled with poor wretches lying on mattresses placed on the ground, I found Lortier, after many inquiries, in a small room, with several other doctors and nurses, who were apparently off duty.

'M. Lortier,' said the nurse who had acted as my guide, 'here is some one who wishes to speak with you.'

The object of my search seemed anything but pleased at being disturbed, for he was lolling in a chair, laughing and joking with a remarkably pretty girl, whose nurse's costume did not altogether hide the *soubrette*. Lortier was a slightly built but uncommonly handsome fellow about thirty, with a light-brown beard cut *à la cuirassier*, and a carefully trimmed moustache brushed upwards. That he should still have been a student showed that either he must have been very stupid or that he had wasted his time considerably. In a word, he gave me the idea of being one of the most finicking dandies I had ever come across.

'We don't attend to people here, my good fellow,' he remarked rather brusquely as he glanced at the bandages on my forehead.

'I have not come about that,' I answered. 'I have brought you letters from Colonel and Mademoiselle Courtois, and also a *passé* from General Schmitz.'

'The dickens you have!' he exclaimed, springing up and changing his manner at once. 'Adieu! my *petite chatte*,' he said, chucking the girl under the chin. 'Now come this way, monsieur,' and he took me into what appeared, from the hares'-foot brushes and rouge lying about, to be a dressing-room.

'And how is mademoiselle, and how does her fire-eating old father find himself?' he asked. 'He's a sly old dog, that colonel. He's as rich as Croesus, only he won't admit it. My mother and his wife, I must tell you, were schoolfellows, and all the world knows that she had no need of money. I know that for a fact, and that is how it is that I and the old fellow don't get on.'

I was very much surprised that Lortier did not open his letters at once; but he seemed in

no hurry, and as I was interested in him I was glad that he did not do so, as his conversation gave me more opportunity of observing his character, though I had seen enough already to judge of that pretty accurately.

'I say,' he asked, 'what's your name? I see you are a corporal.'

'Jean Aymard,' I answered; 'but I am a sergeant now.'

'Are you a son of the famous Maitre Aymard?' 'No; that is my uncle. My father is a notary, and my family live in the Boulevard Malesherbes.'

'Really. I know a pretty little *locataire* in that quarter. My father has gone to Brussels, and I am—well, to tell you the truth, nearly *tout à fait sec*.'

I saw the drift of his conversation, and accordingly told him I had no time to spare; and besides, I was thoroughly disgusted with him. How any man could be so base as to trifle with the affection of such a noble, such a lovely girl as Mademoiselle Courtois was past my comprehension. Taking my hint, he opened the letter of his *fiancée*.

'Ah!' he said jauntily when he had finished perusing it, 'you must tell her to keep up her spirits. Tell her I am quite well. The food is not as good as I should like, and it is difficult to get decent tobacco;' and then he went on for some time complaining of his trivial misfortunes.

I was so tickled by his inordinate selfishness that I had to turn away to hide my amusement.

'Those infernal Germans,' he continued, 'won't stay here much longer, I hope; so tell mademoiselle she must have patience. Between you and me, I think it is a mistake to marry so early, even if one could afford to do so. Besides, my father has been rather restive of late, and he told me the last time I saw him he would not give me any more money till I passed my examination. Lola knows all this; but I wish that you would impress upon her how awkwardly I am placed.' Then he sat down and wrote his *fiancée* a short note, and gave it to me.

'Does the colonel's letter require an answer,' I asked, 'as I must be off?'

'Ah! I had forgotten that,' he replied.

I watched him intently as he read the epistle, for I guessed to a certain extent its contents, and I wondered how he would take it.

'Well,' he exclaimed, looking up to heaven as one who has been deeply wronged—'well, this is perfectly monstrous! Listen to this,' he added, turning to me: "'If you do not think my daughter worth the risk of coming to see her, you are not worthy of her; and if you do not come you may consider your engagement at an end.'" Now, did you ever hear of such a thing? Why, I did go down to Boulogne about a month

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ago, and the men told me it was certain death if I went to the villa.'

'It is not dangerous on a dark night,' I said, 'or, for the matter of that, on a very foggy, dark day.'

'Yes, and walk into the river. No, my friend, I am not going to risk that for all the girls in Christendom. Besides,' he continued, 'it's no affair of her father's. You tell the old dragon that I will not give Lola up till I see in her own handwriting that she wishes to break off our engagement; and as for that *passe* of old Schmitz's, you can keep it; I am sure I am not going to use it.'

It was getting dark now, and Lortier proposed that I should go out and dine with him; but this I could not do.

'Well, have a glass of something to drink. We have got some very fine cognac here. A rich old lady has sent it for the wounded. Very good—isn't it?' he said as he poured out a glass for me and one for himself, and sipped it with the air of a connoisseur. 'She must be a good, simple old woman,' he continued; 'it reminds me of the way we used to eat up the pheasants that the Empress sent from Rambouillet for the hospital. We nearly got into trouble about it once, though, for it happened'—— I had no time to listen to that story, and hurried off.

It was about eight o'clock when I got back, and after showing the *passe* from the chief of the staff, I was permitted by the officer in command—for my own company was not on duty in the trenches that night—to go on my errand. It was perfectly dark, and I made my way quite calmly to the colonel's door, which was immediately opened by Lola on my knocking sharply as we arranged. They were naturally surprised to see me so soon; and after giving up the letters, I threw on the table, much to Marie's delight, the fishing-tackle and a bundle of newspapers which I knew would interest the colonel.

I gave the old officer M. Lortier's message. As I suspected, it rendered him perfectly furious, and his moustache quivered with anger.

'The cowardly scoundrel!' he exclaimed. 'You hear what he says, Lola? Didn't I say he would shirk coming? Now, my girl, just give our friend the letter you have got ready.'

'Very well, father,' she replied rather sadly. 'I suppose it is all for the best. I cannot say that I really ever loved him; but then they say love often comes after marriage.'

'It is difficult to believe, mademoiselle,' I ventured to say; 'but where you are concerned it must also come before.'

She looked up at me with her frank blue eyes, and placed the letter in my hands, but said nothing.

'I trust we may often see you again, Aymard, for we are all deeply indebted to you,' remarked  
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the old officer. 'You keep the envelope franked by General Schmitz; and with that *passe*, which you can get your captain to fill up, there will probably be no difficulty in coming to see us as often as you can.'

I heard his words with a strange feeling of delight. I took his invitation as a good omen, inasmuch as I felt there was at least a chance now of my filling the place of Lola's late *fiancé*, though perhaps it was rather early for me to speculate on that. The poor girl was at first certainly rather quiet; but gradually, as we laughed and talked, and I told them all the news I had been able to pick up, the sadness by degrees wore off, and I flattered myself that perhaps after a while she might see in the distant future a glimpse of that paradise which I, with my sanguine temperament, already pictured, with her as the central figure. The others, too, caught my high spirits; and, as I left them with many a promise to return when I could, few would have thought from our merry chatter that the dreaded Germans were only just across the river, and that a stray shell might at any moment shatter the little house and scatter all our hopes and plans.

I returned to duty next day, and as I watched La Maisonette through the loopholed walls, what *châteaux en Espagne* did I not build!

As I gazed upon the dark, bleak, purple woods opposite, which now resounded with the hoggish grunts of the German invaders, I thought of the bright spring-time that must come. I hoped, if I were spared, that when the blackbirds were singing their first love-songs, and the bluebells were out, and the beeches had put on their green verdure, that I might be able to wander with the two girls under their welcome shade; and I thought of how the squirrels, their solitude disturbed, would spring from branch to branch as they heard our merry laughter, and the memories of the terrible winter would fade away like some horrible dream. But I had little time to indulge in these soft reveries, for the stern duties of the present kept me too busily employed.

It might, in the ordinary course, have been some time ere I should have had the chance of going inside the fortification again had it not been that my captain had an intrigue with some fair friend who lived in the Rue Lafayette. It happened on the last day of the year that he sent me off hurriedly in the afternoon with a note for her, so I took the opportunity, with his permission, to go down to the Théâtre Comédie Française, and give Lola's note to her late *fiancé*. I found Lortier, as before, amusing himself with the society of some of the nurses. It may have been the approach of the *jour de l'an*, but anyway he seemed in the highest spirits.

'How do you find yourself, my good fellow? Glad to see you have got rid of your bandages,'

he exclaimed in his light, ethereal manner as he grasped my hand. 'I am indeed delighted to see you. Brought me good news—eh? Come this way,' he continued without waiting for an answer. 'How are they getting on up at the front? Awfully cold, I should think. I would rather be here than there, though we don't find it all Cliquot and truffles, I can tell you. *Ma foi!* you have no idea of the amount of work we have to do; time is never your own in this place. The wounded never give us any rest. All night long we have to look after them. Some want to see a priest; some cry out for their wives or mothers; some grumble. But, I say, you have brought me a *billet doux*—eh?'

I gave him Lola's letter and a packet of trinkets she had given me. The sight of the latter sobered him a little for the moment.

'Well,' he exclaimed, with a shrug of the shoulders, as he finished reading the note—'well, this finishes our little affair. She is a foolish girl, though,' he continued in a thoughtful voice; 'she might have waited. I am sorry for her. She won't do better, and my mother will be quite upset. It does not make much difference to me. I can wait, and when I get old I shall marry some tender young chicken or some pretty widow with plenty of money.'

'Have you any message?' I asked.

'Well, sergeant,' he replied, with more bitterness than his previous words would have led me to expect, 'I should just like you to tell her old fool of a father that I always thought he had a tile loose, and now I am sure of it.'

'I would rather you tell him that yourself,' I answered dryly, and saluting him, went off.

On returning I got my captain to sign the *passe* of General Schmitz. Thus armed, I had no difficulty in going beyond our lines, and got to La Maisonette about seven, when I told Colonel Courtois all that had taken place, with the exception of Lortier's last message.

'I say, M. Aymard,' said Marie, 'we want you to help us. We are running short of wood. We have, alas! been compelled even to cut down the fruit-trees, and there is nothing left now but the summer-house. An uncle built it to amuse himself; and as it is constructed of oak, and he built it so strongly, we cannot cut it down, for we have only a little saw and a chopper we use in the kitchen. It is out of the question for father to help us, and Lola and I cannot do anything.'

I readily agreed to this. Taking a lantern, the two girls and I sallied out. *Ma foi!* what fun we had as we worked away in the dark! I think the Prussian posts over the water must have heard our laughter. There was, too, a certain irony in our gaiety, for ever and anon through the darkness we heard a heavy boom from a fort, and saw a shell, like some fiendish meteor, flash across the sky. Then, but for our badinage, all was grim and silent again. As

I had to return soon, I had to relinquish the work before we had finished it; but I promised to complete the task as soon as I could.

### CHAPTER III.



WHENEVER my duty permitted me, with the tacit permission of my captain, I now went as often as I could to La Maisonette; but unfortunately the moon was now getting fuller every day (as any one can see who consults an almanac of that date), so that, on account of the great danger, I had to time my visits accordingly. There was comparatively little risk in returning, as I could get over the wall; the danger was in going up the road, which was immediately in front of the German outposts, and waiting till the door was opened. So that it happened that I sometimes started in the twilight just after the sun had set, and only stayed a few minutes, so as to return before the moon had well risen.

'Well, those girls must be pretty,' remarked Grenier one evening about five o'clock, as I was going to start. 'I am afraid, my boy, you will play this game once too often.'

'But I am going to see the colonel on business,' I answered.

'Of course, we all know that,' he replied slyly. 'Apart from the risk, there are plenty of us who would not mind some of that same sort of business.'

I was specially anxious to go on this particular evening. One of my reasons may perhaps indicate a small mind: that very morning, the 12th of January, before the whole battalion, I and three others had had conferred upon us the *Medaille Militaire*—I had received it for rescuing Captain Lebedoyère—and I was vastly pleased at the distinction, and knew that my friends would think more highly of me for having obtained it. Besides, I had not seen them for nearly a week. When I had accidentally mentioned, the last time I saw them, that my fête-day was on the 8th, the girls had said they would give me a present, and naturally I wished to receive it. Colonel Courtois had begged me not to come—and Lola and Marie sided with him—till the moon had run its course; but love is strong, and I had pleaded so earnestly that he had allowed me to come once more. I told him my visit would probably be on the 12th.

Just as I entered the door a bullet from the other side of the river whizzed past my ear; but I had no time to comment upon this. To my surprise, I found the two girls in terrible trouble, and was very glad that I had not listened to Grenier's expostulations. They

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evidently expected me, for I found the door ajar.

'Oh, M. Aymard,' exclaimed Lola as I breathlessly entered, 'father has had a fit! Whatever shall we do? He has had them before, and we always keep by us a particular medicine which the doctor told us to give him; but we have no more of it now; and if'—her voice quivered as she spoke, and I saw by the little lamp the tears welling into those lovely eyes that had so often made my pulse beat faster—and if we cannot get some more medicine, we are afraid from what the doctor told us he may go off at any moment.'

At this point, plucky and brave as she was, the noble girl quite broke down, and poor little Marie joined in with her sobs. Taking me by the hand, Lola led me to the sofa, on which I saw the old officer lying in a comatose state. His face was of an ashy whiteness, and my first impression was that he was dead; but after listening intently and placing a glass over his mouth, I was relieved to find that he still breathed.

'My poor lass,' I said to Lola in my distress, quite forgetting the conventionalities, 'have you got the prescription?'

'No,' she replied; 'we cannot find it. But here is the empty bottle; it has the reference number and the chemist's address on it, so the preparation can be made up from that. See, there is the date and everything.'

Unfortunately this pharmacy was in the Rue de Bac, on the *rive gauche*, and it would be an impossibility for me to go as far, even if I started at once, as I had to go round with the guard at eight that evening; and the colonel had entrusted me with a very important commission, to get food in the morning from the central stores for the battalion. On previous occasions there had been a great deal of robbery in spite of all the vigilance of the officers, and I felt proud of the confidence reposed in me, and determined that nothing should go wrong on this occasion if I could help it. Under these circumstances I foresaw the awkwardness of my position, and how perfectly helpless I was. Love pulled me one way and duty another. I explained all this as quickly as I could. 'Mademoiselle,' I said, 'rely on me. I have a comrade I can trust; he has a good heart. I will make it worth his while, too. I will start at once, and to-morrow at seven, without fail, I will come.'

'But to-morrow at seven,' replied Lola, 'the moon will be up, and with all this snow on the ground it will be as bright as day.'

'Don't you trouble yourself about that,' I returned.

For a moment she stood in deep thought. 'I will tell you what is best,' she said. 'Do not leave the lines till you see me. At seven precisely I will stand outside the door. You will, as usual, make for the wall at the bottom of the

garden; then, as you turn the corner up the road, I shall be between you and the Prussians, and they will be afraid to fire at you, if you keep close to the wall, for fear of hitting me; but even then I do not like your risking your life in this way.'

'What is my life?'—I had almost said 'my darling,' but restrained myself—'against the pleasure of helping you in your distress?' I answered softly.

She glanced up for a moment into my face with her tear-dimmed eyes. 'I am grateful,' she said; 'we are both grateful—are we not, Marie? We only hope that you will come to no harm, so that we may have the opportunity of proving our gratitude.'

'Have no fear for me, mademoiselle,' I said as we went down the garden; 'keep up your spirits, and I shall hope to find your good father much better to-morrow.' I spoke as cheerfully as I could; but the words stuck in my throat, for, to tell the truth, I hardly expected to find the old officer alive the next day.

We had reached the wall, and I was about to mount the ladder, when Marie hurriedly begged me to wait. 'Stay, M. Aymard; we have forgotten to give you our little present. I will be back in a moment,' and without another word she ran back to the house, leaving her sister and myself alone. It would not have been fair, under the sad and peculiar circumstances in which she was placed, for me to have told the beautiful girl then and there how much I loved her; but as the pale moon shone on her lovely face, it was as much as I could do to restrain my feelings. I felt certain, too, that she reciprocated my love. I was buttoning my coat when her eye caught sight of the bright medal I had received that morning.

'Why, what is that?' she asked. 'You have been decorated? Well, I am pleased,' she said when I had given her particulars, 'because you have been so anxious to possess a medal.'

'Yes,' I answered, 'I was indeed surprised and delighted to receive it. There is only one thing in the whole world that I would rather gain'—In spite of all my resolutions I would have probably told her what that was, but just then Marie came racing down towards us, and I had only time to whisper, as I looked down into the depths of her blue eyes, 'You know what that is, mademoiselle.'

'Here it is, Monsieur Aymard!' exclaimed the young girl breathlessly. 'Lola and I have made you this comforter. When you are watching over us in the trenches you must wear it. You see it is all manner of colours, for we had not much wool.' Then she added with a smile, 'I have some good news to tell you, and that is that father seems to have come round. He is really better.'

'I am glad to hear that,' I replied; 'and as for your present, I shall certainly always value it for



the sake of those who made it. But, alas! I must be off now. It is understood, then, mademoiselle,' I continued, turning to Lola, 'that I shall see you to-morrow at seven.' I don't know what possessed me—I suppose I was carried away by the beauty of the girl—I could not help adding, 'If—if I succeed to-morrow'—but here my courage failed me.

'And what then?' she asked, extending her hand to bid me adieu.

'Well, if I succeed—if I succeed,' I blurted out, 'will you give me a kiss—one, only just one—to-morrow?'

'*Ma foi!*' interposed her sister, with a laugh, 'she ought to give you a dozen—as many as you like then. *Parbleu!* I would.'

I saw Lola blush, and I feared that I had taken undue advantage of her. 'Am I asking too much, mademoiselle?' I pleaded earnestly. 'If so, forget my words as though they had never been spoken.'

'No, no,' she answered nervously, and then without replying directly to my question, with a bright and almost roguish smile on her face that drove away all doubt within me, she added, 'To-morrow, then, at seven.'

With these words ringing in my ears, I reached our lines in safety. The *état-major* of our battalion was quartered in the beautiful villa of the Rothschilds; but the company on duty used as a guard-room a charming little house nearer the river, formerly the residence of a well-known actress. When I had gone with my captain round with the guard and posted the men, I asked him if I could speak with him for a moment.

'Well, sergeant, what is it?' he said as he threw himself on what had once been a beautifully embroidered sofa. Then I told him everything that had taken place at La Maisonnette, and my proposed task on the following evening.

'It is certainly rather risky,' he remarked as I concluded; 'in fact, it is perfect madness to go at that time. Why not slip out at about four in the morning, when it is dark, and wake them up and tell them you cannot come till later? Besides, there's not so much need for the medicine, as you say the colonel is better.'

I could not bring myself to take his advice. I thought of the two girls all alone and defenceless in their trouble, and pictured the scorn on Lola's face—a scorn that I felt I would justly merit if I failed to keep my word when she had promised me such a reward; for I reckoned with all a lover's impetuosity that if I but gained her kiss she was as good as mine. I became intoxicated, as it were, at the very thought of my good fortune. All danger was forgotten; and as I went out into the night to see that my half-frozen men were on the alert at their respective posts, I seemed to tread on air.

Ah! what dreams came floating through my brain! The bitter wind to me had lost its

keenness, and as the moon shone out in all its splendour my spirits rose, for every moment brought me nearer to the girl I loved; and those long hours of dreary watching that formerly I had so hated seemed nothing to me now. All the misery, all the sadness, that like some dark cloud had hung over us for three long months, seemed suddenly to have passed away. As I gazed through the crenelated wall across the snow, and saw the little house where Lola was, and thought of her sweet face and the indefinable charm of her manner, I wondered whether she too was thinking of me. Gradually the moon sank in the west, and by degrees the landscape darkened; and but for a '*Qui vive?*' now and again, silence and gloom reigned everywhere, except to the south, where the methodical booming never ceased day or night, for the Prussians had got their heavy siege-guns up at last, and since the 5th of January, with thirty batteries (one hundred and eighty guns), they had, from the heights of Meudon, Clamart, and Chatillon, opened fire on the forts of Issy, Vauves, and Montrouge, which are situated between these heights and the *enceinte*.

At last the *diane* sounded, and those who were in the guard-room made their morning *café*. Then as the sun was just about to rise the *picquet* came to relieve us.

As I marched down the Avenue de la Grande Armée on the following afternoon alongside a heavily-laden *fourgon*, I noted with pleasure that the weather seemed getting milder, and that snow or even rain was coming. On arriving at our quarters I learnt that my comrade had been able to get the medicine, and as I pressed a louis into his hand I felt I had hardly rewarded him sufficiently. As the time approached Lebedoyère came up and begged me to give up my enterprise, but without success. The moon, it is true, was rising fast, and it was almost as light as day; but dark masses of clouds were looming in the north, and as they scurried across the wild wintry sky they obliterated the moonlight every now and then; and as I watched anxiously I thought how, had I been a heathen, I should have prayed to Diana that she, the 'dark-haired goddess of the night,' would, if only for a few moments, consent to hide her pallid beauty.

'It only wants two minutes now,' said my captain, who was looking towards the house through his field-glasses. 'There she is!' he exclaimed a moment later; and sure enough, standing out clearly against the snow, I saw Lola waiting for me.

'Adieu, *mon capitaine!*' I said.

'Adieu, Aymard!' he answered as he wrung my hand.

It seemed indeed as if Diana did intend to favour my undertaking, for at that moment a

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heavy cloud hid her completely; but unfortunately the semi-darkness lasted but for a moment, and I had not got half-way to the wall of the colonel's garden when I was observed by the German outposts near the Pont de Sèvres. Their bullets did me no harm; but the firing undoubtedly put their comrades opposite La Maisonette on the alert, if their vigilance was not already excited by seeing the colonel's daughter standing in the road.

On reaching the wall, as I waited a moment to get my breath, the thought suddenly flashed upon me: what a fool I was, not only then, but on previous occasions, not to have brought a rope with me, which might have been fixed firmly on the other side, and which the girls could have thrown over to me when they heard my voice! But it was too late now; so, turning the corner sharply, I raced towards Lola.

'I've got the medicine,' I cried softly as I approached her. 'I have kept my promise.'

'And I will keep mine,' she exclaimed, with a bright love-light in her eyes, and as she spoke retreated just within the threshold.

In that blissful moment I forgot everything but her presence, and in my eagerness I stood unfortunately for one second on the step, in a direct line with the mirror of which I have spoken. My arms were round Lola's neck, and hers round mine, and our lips had met, when—three sharp reports rang out across the river. One bullet passed through her fair white arm, which was the only part of her exposed, and with a piercing cry she fell backward, whilst I staggered forward into the room, with a bullet in the hip and another in the ankle. I was crippled for life, but I won my kiss, and I won Lola.

## A COMMON GRAVE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

No ponderous tomb, no fretted vaults are there.  
Rude crosses mark the spot, and witness bear  
To where the unnamed dead in slumber lie,  
Beneath the charged cloud or golden sky.

No stately yew shall rear a canopy;  
But mossy rock and boulders rude shall be  
Their angel-guarded, nature-hallowed shrine,  
And heaven's sweet dew their sacramental wine.

Above, a temple never built with hands—  
The starlight, and the sapphire heaven—with spans  
E'en loftier far than abbey-shadowed aisle  
Or columned splendour of cathedral pile.

The veldt-scrub is their only chancel rail,  
The sun-baked sod their kneeling-cushion pale.

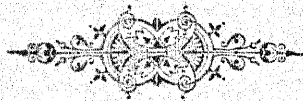
No full-voiced choir is there in cloister dim,  
No priestly note, no stirring swell of hymn.

The ponderous crash of organ's labouring roll  
Has brought no solace to their passing soul;  
Yet Nature's clarion call and antiphon  
Peals ever round their grave in unison.

The climbing vines their fragrant censers swing,  
O'er all the hallowed air the wild-flowers fling  
Their breathing incense to the heavenly dome,  
Pointing the way to man's eternal home.

From comrade's side, from battle's bloody fame,  
God in His mercy called them home again.  
He called His own who fell in glorious strife,  
And wrote their names within His book of life.

VIOLET TWEEDALE.



# THE KING'S TINTORETTO.

By ADAM R. THOMSON.

## I.



IN one of the private apartments of the Royal Palace at Mannstadt, the King of Terrania sat at breakfast with his only sister, the Princess Margaret. He had just finished reading a letter, which, with an involuntary glance at his companion, he now laid on the table in front of him. Then he pushed away his plate, and declared peevishly that he could eat no more.

'What is the matter, Charles?' inquired the Princess, in a voice in which anxiety was not unmingled with firmness.

'Matter!' he echoed angrily, as a flush mounted to his boyish face—he was not yet twenty-four. 'You are the matter—you, Margaret!'

'I thought so,' replied the girl. 'That letter, I suppose, is from the Baron von Hasenheim?'

He nodded assent. 'You can read it if you like,' he said.

'You are very kind, but I won't trouble. I dare say I can guess its contents. It is not the first communication you have had from the Baron since he has been in Russia, and I presume it does not materially differ from its predecessors. The Chancellor of Terrania is no doubt an excellent statesman, but his strong point is certainly not originality.'

'No,' said the King, 'it is not. Hasenheim abhors everything of a dangerous or revolutionary tendency, and—perhaps it would be as well if others in high places were as sound in their ideas as he is. He hasn't been in England, doesn't ride a bicycle, or even cultivate the mixed society of the students who use our National Picture Gallery.'

'Thank you so much,' rejoined the Princess, as, with a light laugh, she rose from her chair, curtsied, and sat down again.

'I mean what I say,' exclaimed King Charles; 'there's nothing to joke about. To do so at a crisis like this is to imitate Nero, who, you will remember, fiddled while—'

'My dear Charles,' interrupted his sister, 'pray don't let your admiration for the Baron carry you too far. Even the unoriginal are not necessarily trite. But there,' she added quickly, 'you needn't get angry; I won't be frivolous any more. See, I am now quite serious.'

She smoothed back a stray curl from her low, broad forehead, tightly compressed her lips, and

assumed an expression of extreme severity, which sat strangely on her pretty, mobile face.

For a few moments her brother silently drummed on the table with his fingers; then he said slowly:

'Of course I know you're ever so much cleverer than I am, Margaret; but then, after all, I'm the king, and you, as my sister, ought to—to—in short, to consider the responsibilities of my—of our position.'

'In other words, I ought to agree to marry Prince Porodski?'

'Just so.'

'It is the one thing I cannot and will not do.'

'But you must; indeed you must. Our very existence as an independent state will be imperilled if we do not at once obtain a loan of three hundred thousand marks. Well, France will lend us the money only on condition that we form a closer alliance with Russia. To do this, as Hasenheim has now ascertained, your marriage to the Prince is essential.'

'I detest the man. He is elderly, stout, and deadly dull. The week he spent here was the most miserable week of my life. It is wicked of you to ask me to marry him.'

'You are unreasonable, Margaret, and—prejudiced. Porodski may have the disadvantages you mention, but you must admit that his wealth and influence are enormous. In becoming his wife you would be stepping into a position second to that of scarcely any woman in Europe.'

'Ah, and what then?'

'Why, then you—you might make history.'

'The prospect does not attract me. Its risks to one of my sex are too many and obvious.'

'Or you might patronise the arts and sciences, and start a *salon*!'

'At which my principal duty would be to apologise for my husband's absence. No, thank you, Charles; I don't seek distinction in that way either.'

'You surprise me; I thought art was the passion of your life. You have often told me that your happiest hours are those you spend painting.'

The girl blushed ever so slightly. 'To love good art,' she replied, 'is one thing, to patronise indifferent artists quite another.'

'Well, Margaret, it comes to this. Rather than make a marriage of exceptional brilliancy, you are prepared to see me disgraced and Terrania plunged in the horrors of a revolution; for, with agriculture in its present depressed

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condition, these results must inevitably follow any attempt to raise the money we require by further taxation.'

There was a brief pause; then the Princess asked suddenly:

'If one of us must marry, why should it not be you, Charles?'

'State reasons stand in the way. The only suitable Princess is unavailable at present; she is barely fourteen, in fact.' He gave a laugh, not entirely free from bitterness.

'Then, could not a loan be obtained from some Power that would not make any conditions?'

'Such a Power does not exist.'

'No'—slowly—'I dare say not. Still, you might find one whose terms it would be possible to satisfy.'

'To borrow from any other country than France would be against our interests, and'—

'To borrow from France against my interests.'

The King's hands twitched impatiently. 'Then you are determined to defy us?' he exclaimed.

'I have no option.'

'Very well; the Baron shall be informed of your decision without delay. I have no doubt he will find a way to bring you to your senses.'

He rose to leave the room, but she called him back, and with a deprecatory gesture he resumed his seat. 'What is the use of continuing the discussion?' he murmured sullenly.

'I want to ask you a question,' she replied. 'Supposing by some means or other I could obtain the money you want, would you use your influence with Hasenheim to drop—at all events for the present—the question of my marriage to Prince Porodski?'

The King looked doubtful. Deep down in his heart he loved and admired his sister; but, on the other hand, he was terribly afraid of interfering with the plans of the aged statesman who had practically guided the destinies of Terrania during the whole of his three years' reign, and for the two previous decades.

'Three hundred thousand marks is a large sum,' he observed at last. 'I cannot imagine how you could get it.'

'I don't know that I can, but may I try?'

'I—I suppose so; but, of course, you must tell me what you propose to do.'

'So I will. It is only right. I'm going to the National Gallery now to spend the morning finishing the copy I've been making of Tintoretto's "Dream." While I work I can be concreting my ideas, and when we meet at lunch I'll tell you everything. Meanwhile, you won't write to Baron von Hasenheim—will you, dear?'

'No; though you must understand that I don't in any way pledge myself to—to'—

'Certainly not, Charles,' she cried, with a laugh. 'I quite understand—quite.' Then, before he could reply, she ran from the room.

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## II.



ATE in the evening of the day on which the interview recorded above took place, Sir George Mullworthy, the British ambassador to Terrania, was enjoying a post-prandial cigar in his own particular sanctum at the Embassy, when the sudden entrance of a tall, fair-haired man caused him to drop the English newspaper he had been reading, and to rise hurriedly from his easy-chair with the cry of, 'Elstree, by all that's wonderful!'

'Just so,' replied his visitor as they shook hands. 'Elstree, and none other. I wouldn't let your man announce me; wanted to surprise you, don't you know? Glad to see you looking so well, old fellow.'

'Oh, I'm right enough, thanks, though a little lonely just now. Lady Mullworthy is in England, and I can't get away to join her for another fortnight. But what on earth brings you to this dismal hole, Elstree? I thought you always spent the beginning of July at Henley.'

'I do as a rule; but, well—at present Mannstadt has superior attractions for me. I've been here for several days, in fact.'

'H'm. Why didn't you come to see me before?'

'Oh, I've been travelling incog., under the name of Harold Grant, and I didn't want to risk my real identity becoming known. I'm not sure that I should have ventured to visit you now had I not needed your assistance.'

'Well, sit down, take a cigar, have a drink, and tell me what I can do for you.'

Lord Elstree availed himself of Mullworthy's proffered hospitality, and then, as he blew a cloud of smoke into the air, remarked gravely:

'I have recently been developing a taste for art, Sir George.'

'Great heavens!'

'Precisely. It is true, nevertheless. Every morning this week you might have seen me, dressed in the garb of the conventional student, spending hours in the Terranian National Gallery in front of that masterpiece, Tintoretto's "Dream."'

'And you didn't find it slow?'

'I should just think not.'

'Then all I can say is you have undergone a remarkable change in the two years that have passed since we last met, Elstree.'

'Oh, I have indeed.'

'Though, of course, I knew your father was a connoisseur in pictures, as witness the collection at your place in Kent.'

'Yes, yes,' laughed Elstree. 'After all, belated manifestations of the hereditary principle are not unheard of. However, to come to the point, although I've passed so much time in

front of the Tintoretto, I've been engaged in a much more entertaining occupation than mere contemplation. I've been renewing a delightful acquaintanceship I formed last winter with a young lady who—much against the wishes of her friends, I understand—was finishing her education at Girton. In a word, Princess Margaret of Terrania has promised to be my wife.'

Sir George Mullworthy took his cigar from his mouth, and gazed at his friend in blank amazement.

'But'—he ejaculated at last.

'Of course, Mullworthy, there's a "but." It's to remove it I require your help.'

'My dear Elstree, I'm extremely sorry to disappoint you; we were college chums, and we've always got on well together, and so forth; but for a man in my position to mix himself up in an elopement would simply be madness.'

'I have no intention of eloping; I mean to marry the Princess openly. Why shouldn't I? I've got enough money to keep her in comfort, shall we say? and my blood is as blue as is to be found in England, outside the circle of royalty at least.'

'Yes, yes; but I happen to know that they are determined to marry her to an elderly Russian prince. The Premier, Von Hasenheim, is in Russia arranging the matter now.'

'Quite so. It was on the receipt of a letter from the Princess informing me of these facts that I hurried to Mannstadt. Terrania, it seems, is in the midst of a crisis, and they are ready to sacrifice Margaret in order to please France and Russia, with a view to obtaining a loan from the former Power.'

'Crises occur about once a fortnight in third-rate, impetuous states like this,' observed the ambassador absently. 'My policy is invariably to do nothing.'

'Still, I suppose, Great Britain does not regard this projected marriage with any special favour.'

'No; but it is no concern of hers. Though, of course, if it were possible to take a rise out of France and Russia without risks, we should not be indisposed to do so.'

'It is possible, my dear fellow.'

The ambassador smiled incredulously. 'Without risks?' he queried.

'Absolutely. Listen, and I'll tell you how. That picture we've just been speaking of, Tintoretto's "Dream," is, as you must know, the private property of the King.'

Mullworthy nodded. 'His Majesty lent it to the Gallery about two months since,' he remarked, 'at the suggestion of the Princess, who has democratic leanings, and was anxious that the public should have an opportunity of seeing a work she herself so greatly admired. Hasenheim, as I have heard, was, strangely

enough, not told till the loan was a *fait accompli*, and was consequently exceedingly annoyed.'

'No doubt,' laughed Elstree. 'However, the King is about to withdraw the picture. In fact, it is being removed from the Gallery to-night. A very good copy, which the Princess finished only this morning, is to be hung in its stead.'

'Indeed! But, my dear fellow, may I ask what all this has to do with the matter we have been discussing?'

'The King,' replied the young nobleman, leaning forward in his chair and scanning the other anxiously, 'wishes to sell his picture. He has agreed, if he can obtain the money his Government want in this way, not to press for Margaret's marriage to Prince Porodski at present.'

'Well?'

'Well, to-morrow morning you will receive a letter from the Princess offering the picture, on His Majesty's behalf, to the British Government for a sum of three hundred thousand marks.'

'To—the—British Government? Good gracious, man! we've no money to spend on pictures just now. Guns are more in our line.'

'All the same, George, by accepting the Princess's offer you will at once thwart France and Russia and—render me a service I shall never forget. As for the money, that is my affair. I will supply it. But you must allow the King to think your Government are concerned in the transaction, and that the picture is destined for the National Gallery. Further, by to-morrow night it must be on its way to England, addressed to the trustees of that institution. Come, my friend, do you consent?'

Sir George Mullworthy sat several minutes smoking before he observed slowly:

'Your proposal is simply extraordinary, Elstree, and I—I don't know what to say. May I remind you that I am entirely in the dark as to how what you suggest can in the least degree assist in bringing about a marriage between Princess Margaret and yourself? Even if the idea of marrying the Princess to Porodski were permanently abandoned, I feel positive that Von Hasenheim would never agree to accept you as His Majesty's brother-in-law.'

'That, my dear fellow, is exactly where you are wrong. I can't tell you why at present, but I can promise you full enlightenment in less than a week.'

'And you can guarantee that I shall run no risks?'

'Certainly. I have already said so.'

'Very well, then; I will do as you wish.'

Lord Elstree expressed his gratitude, and shortly afterwards left to return to his hotel. Before retiring to rest he wrote several letters, some to leading London newspapers, and one, on

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which he expended much care, to the Baron von Hasenheim at St Petersburg. To this communication he appended the partly fictitious name under which he was now travelling, reflecting as he did so that the Chancellor was hardly likely to guess that Harold Grant and Harold William Graylotte, Earl of Elstree, were one and the same person.

### III.



THREE days passed away, and on the morning of the fourth King Charles and his sister were once more at breakfast together. His Majesty's demeanour had completely changed since the sale of the Tintoretto had placed him in possession of some ready money; he was now as cheerful as he had before been irritable. With Margaret he was on the best of terms; and she, on her side, had been careful, so far, not to refer to either of the two matters likely to cause him uneasiness—to wit, her own matrimonial project, and the explanation which would become necessary on the Baron's return from Russia. The King, however, himself approached the latter subject, by saying confidentially:

'I shall tell Hasenheim all about the picture directly he gets back, though it really has nothing to do with him how I dispose of my own property. However, to avoid unpleasantness, I shall tell him; and I shall at the same time offer to lend the State three hundred thousand marks, though I shall actually hand over only two hundred thousand.'

'I thought the Government wanted the whole three, Charles?'

'Ye—es, Margaret, that is so; but—well, they are a hundred thousand in arrears with my allowance, and I can't wait any longer for it. To tell you the truth, I was tempted to play for high stakes a week or two since, and I lost.'

'Oh Charles!'

'I won't play on such terms again, my dear, I assure you. The hundred thousand has more than paid what I owe, but I don't mean to risk any further losses.'

'I hope not. Suppose the people came to regard you as a gambler, Charles.'

'Well, my dear, many of them would no doubt be shocked, but the majority would merely say that, after all, they liked their ruler to be human.'

'Still, a man in your position can't afford to be too human.'

'I won't be; though really, you know, Margaret, I never credited you with being above the ordinary failings of humanity yourself.'

'I'm not, Charles; far from it.' She almost regretted that she could not seize this opportunity

of telling him of the English lover of whose existence even he was not yet aware. But Elstree had pledged her to silence, and she dared not break her word.

'I am still lost in astonishment,' said the King presently; 'first, that the British Government should want to buy pictures; and, secondly, that you should have been able to find out that fact.'

'You shall hear how I made that discovery by-and-by, my dear Charles. Meanwhile you won't forget that you have undertaken that I shall not be worried any more about Prince Porodski.'

'I won't worry you about him, and I—I'll assert my authority and prevent Hasenheim from doing so, for a time at least.'

At this moment a servant entered, and, with a low bow, handed His Majesty a telegram and retired. The King tore open the envelope, and having hastily perused the message, passed it without a word to Margaret.

It was from the Baron von Hasenheim, and ran as follows: 'Heard yesterday you had sold Tintoretto to British Government. Started for home at once. Transaction must be cancelled at all cost. Explain on arrival.'

'What does he mean? Who has told him?' gasped the King.

'The telegram was handed in at Breslau,' said the Princess meditatively; 'he'll be here in six hours.'

'But I—I cannot cancel the transaction now. I've disposed of a great part of the money.'

'Of course not. Besides, the picture is in England by this time.'

'Yes; Hasenheim is too late, whatever he means.'

'Well, Charles, you must tell him so when you see him.'

'I—I will,' said the King dubiously, rising from the table.

Margaret also rose, and making her way to her own room, wrote a short note to Harold Grant, Esquire, and directed its immediate delivery at that gentleman's hotel. It was a request that he would meet her in an hour at a certain secluded spot in the Botanical Gardens, whither she was about to proceed on her bicycle. He had particularly desired to be informed at the earliest moment of the receipt of any information as to the Chancellor's return, and she consequently determined to lose no time in imparting the disquieting intelligence that had just reached the Palace.

Elstree, however, whom she duly met at the rendezvous appointed, was by no means perturbed at her news. On the contrary, he cried delightedly:

'Splendid, my darling, splendid! The Baron's return to Mannstadt to-day is just what I expected. To-morrow you will understand why it was I suggested the sale of the picture, when



it would have been far simpler and more agreeable for me to have advanced the money you wanted. To-morrow, Margaret, I shall have obtained Hasenheim's consent to our betrothal.'

There was no one about, and they said many more things (which, however, do not concern this narrative) before they parted, she to cycle back to the Palace, he to walk at a brisk pace to the British Embassy.

He was ushered into the presence of the ambassador, who, having greeted him somewhat excitedly, placed a copy of the *Morning Post* of the previous day in his hand, and pointed to a brief paragraph in the corner of the centre page.

'Read that,' said Mullworthy, 'and tell me, if you can, who on earth has put it in.'

This is what Lord Elstree read:

'A very important addition is about to be made to the Foreign Section of the National Gallery, the Trustees having secured a characteristic though little-known example of Tintoretto's art, entitled "The Dream." The picture in question has, we believe, been purchased from His Majesty the King of Terrania.'

'Extremely interesting,' observed Elstree calmly as he put down the paper.

'Yes, yes; but who has put the paragraph in?'

'I'll tell you, my dear George; I did.'

'You?' Mullworthy half-rose in his agitation.

'Certainly. I sent it to the other papers as well, and I've no doubt they've all inserted it.'

'But I thought it was understood between us that you were to wire one of the Trustees of the National Gallery that the picture had been sent there in error, and was to be readdressed to your place in Kent.'

'Quite so.'

'And yet you—oh, confound it, Elstree! what are you driving at? I am completely mystified by your proceedings.'

The other laughed. 'To one of my ingenuous nature,' he remarked, 'to indulge in a little mystification, or may I say diplomacy?—of the old kind, of course—has all the charm of novelty.'

'But your promise that I should run no risks?'

'Oh, that'll be all right, Mullworthy. But, look here, old man, what I came to tell you was this. Hasenheim is returning home, and will be at Mannstadt in a few hours. It is a hundred to one he'll be calling upon you in the course of the afternoon with reference to the picture affair. He'll want you to forego the bargain—which, however, you mustn't do on any consideration. Say—or stop—it's a fine day; have an afternoon in the country, and don't leave word where you've gone.'

'As you will. I've no wish to interview the Baron at present, and I'm too bewildered to dissent from anything you propose.'

'Good. When the old fellow finds you are not available, his next move will probably be to call on me, and then—well, come and dine with me to-night at eight, and you shall hear everything. Meanwhile, I hope you'll enjoy your outing.' With which his lordship waved his hand gaily and took his departure.

#### IV.



BARON VON HASENHEIM arrived in Mannstadt in the worst of tempers, and after a very unsatisfactory interview with the King, drove to the British Embassy. The absence of the ambassador threw him into a state of mind bordering on frenzy; but after a moment's thought he grew somewhat calmer, and murmuring an address to his coachman, re-entered his carriage. A few minutes later and he was seated in the hotel sitting-room, occupied by Harold Grant.

'I have little time to spare,' said the Baron bluntly as he took a letter from his pocket, 'and I will therefore at once ask you, Mr Grant, what is the meaning of this?'

The other took the missive from him, hastily scanned it, and returned it.

'I seem to have made myself clear enough,' he said. 'The King has sold to the British Government as a genuine Tintoretto a picture which is a mere copy; that is all.'

'Ah! I admit nothing of the sort.'

'It is of little consequence what you admit, my lord. The picture has ere this arrived in London, and the Trustees of the National Gallery are not fools—they know a copy when they see one.'

'Well, we will leave that question for a moment. You say in this letter that you are the only person who can set the matter straight. What do you mean by that?'

'Merely, my lord, that I am the owner of the original.'

'You—are—the—owner—of the—original?' echoed the Baron slowly. 'You had better be careful, sir; the original was'—He stopped suddenly.

'It was sold twenty years ago by the late King of Terrania to the late Earl of Elstree.'

Hasenheim started.

'Sold when one of the frequent crises which occur here rendered his late Majesty in need of funds. It was sold on condition that it should not be publicly exhibited, and that the transaction should be kept a secret. A copy replaced it in the Palace, and none knew of the sale save

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those immediately concerned and the Baron von Hasenheim.

'It—it is not true, sir.'

'Pardon me, Baron; certain papers found after the death of Lord Elstree give a full history of the transaction. These papers are now in my possession.'

Von Hasenheim knitted his brow, but said nothing.

'You see,' continued the other, 'the purchaser of the picture happened to be my father.'

'Oh, then you are'—

'The Earl of Elstree. That is so. But now, my lord, what do you propose to do? The present King has imprudently made no stipulation as to secrecy; the picture has been sent to the National Gallery in London: the English papers have already announced its acquisition: the Trustees of the National Gallery are hard men; and, in short, His Majesty and Terrania can only be saved from humiliation by the substitution of the original picture for the copy.'

'And you?'—

'I am prepared to part with the original on one condition.'

'Let me hear it.'

'It is very simple. I merely require you to assent to my marriage to the Princess Margaret of Terrania.'

Hasenheim sprang from his chair. 'You are a madman,' he cried.

'I cannot see it. I met the Princess in England, and we have learnt to love each other. I am one of the richest men in Europe. Why should we not marry?'

'Because—oh, for a million reasons,' answered Hasenheim, weakly subsiding into his chair.

'Well, you must take your choice; either I marry the Princess, or else'— He broke off with an expressive gesture.

'This is infamous,' murmured the Baron.

'No, Baron,' rejoined Elstree hotly. 'The infamy would have been to have insisted, from motives of political expediency, on a young and beautiful girl marrying a worn-out *roué* whom she detested.'

The aged Chancellor sat perfectly still for several minutes, considering the situation in all its aspects. Anxious to please France and Russia, he was nevertheless afraid of offending Great Britain. Besides—and this was the great point—the depleted condition of the national exchequer was a strong reason for agreeing to Elstree's terms, extravagant as they were.

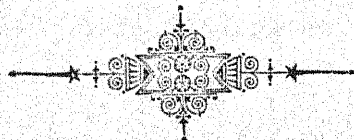
'Very well,' he said at last as he rose to go. 'If the Princess chooses to make a *mésalliance*, she shall do so.'

'Thank you, my lord,' replied Elstree. 'That is all I require. To-morrow, with your invaluable aid, I doubt not His Majesty will return a favourable answer to my suit.'

Then he escorted Hasenheim to his carriage, and the Chancellor was driven to his residence, lamenting alike the folly of his royal master and the horribly unconventional ideas of the infatuated Margaret.

Lord Elstree returned to his apartment, and when Sir George Mullworthy duly appeared at the hour of eight, he told him, in the highest of spirits, all that had occurred. Mullworthy was naturally astonished, but as the matter had ended satisfactorily he could afford to treat it lightly.

'Well, Elstree,' he said, 'I congratulate you both on the excellent cards you held, and on the superb way in which you played them. The result is in every respect magnificent, and I am delighted to have been able to assist you in bringing it about. At the same time, my dear fellow, had fate made you a diplomatist instead of a millionaire, your views as to what is and what is not risky would, I feel pretty certain, have undergone very considerable modification.'



# THE SEALED PACKET.

BY THOMAS ST E. HAKE,

AUTHOR OF 'THE SHIP-BREAKERS,' 'WITHIN SOUND OF THE WEIR,' ETC.

## CHAPTER I.

### UNDER THE CABIN LAMP.



I was still night when I woke in my narrow berth. I had taken passage on board the liner *La Plata*; and it was the powerful revolutions of the ship's screw, beating with its monotonous throb into my throbbing ear, that had roused me. It had brought to my recollection that I had placed something for safety under the mattress. I now raised myself upon my elbow and peered round. I was racked with fever; and it was doubtless this fever that stirred within me a sudden sense of dread. From behind the red curtain drawn closely across the opposite bunk came the sound of regular breathing; it came from my fellow-passenger. I rose with an effort, softly drew the curtain aside, and looked in upon him.

The light of the lamp swinging in the cabin-roof between our two berths fell upon the man who lay there apparently sound asleep. Of a sudden he opened his eyes upon me, and the look—though no more than the look of a dreaming man—sent an involuntary shudder through me. The fever had taken a firm hold; and now a panic-stricken thought seemed to grip my brain: what if the thing I had taken such special care to conceal had been stolen from under me while I slept? I lifted the light mattress in actual fear and trembling. No! There the thing lay safe and secure enough. It was an oblong sealed packet.

As I seated myself upon my trunk and turned the packet over in my hot hand I was now seized with a more comprehensible dread. 'What if I grow so feverish as to lose my wits,' I muttered, 'before I have mastered all that is written within?'

I placed my hand upon the seal. Then I paused, thoughtfully recalling another's words: 'When read, throw it into the swirling waters behind the great screw, where it will whirl and sink, while the secret will rest with you.'

'What secret?'

'My secret. The secret as to where diamonds valued at half-a-million pounds sterling were left deposited by me when last in London, nearly a year ago; and the way to find them, if you keep fixed in your mind what I have written here.'

'These diamonds, Mr Pepworth—do they become your niece's under the will?'

'Yes; everything will go—will have gone—to her before you reach England. For I am dying—dying. Stay! you'll find a photograph of Gwennie—one of my nieces, I mean—in my desk. Yes, that's it!'

'She is very beautiful.'

'I think so. Dear Gwennie! But, by-the-by—if you like the fancy—call this portrait my legacy to you. You're welcome. And now—go! Remember, her fortune rests solely with you—in your hands.'

There had been no time for more; no time to reveal the secret, even if Simon Pepworth—my dearest friend, a Brazilian diamond-merchant—had so minded. I, John Sherwood, mining engineer, had come to Buenos Ayres summoned there in all haste from up-country to the dying man's bedside. This momentous document, now in my possession, had been fully prepared and put under seal. My orders had been to take it with me, read and then destroy it as soon as the ship left port. Pepworth was dying—dead now, as I had no reason to doubt; and the place where his fortune in diamonds—now Gwennie Pepworth's fortune—was stowed away and the detailed instructions as to its disposal were at this midnight hour actually known to no living man.

I had contracted the fever during my hurried journey to the coast; and it was only now that I seriously realised the need to make myself, without another moment's loss of time, thoroughly acquainted with the contents of the sealed packet. Gwennie Pepworth's fortune, a fortune in Brazilian diamonds, was practically in my keeping. Everything seemed to depend on me; and it is not improbable, had there been time for deeper reflection, that I should have uttered a protest; the responsibility almost appalled me! Might not a single mishap make it possible that these diamonds would never again meet the light?

These thoughts sped swiftly through my brain as I broke the seal. My head throbbed more violently than ever; and when I came to unfold the document, all that was written there seemed nothing more to me than a blurred and blotted page.

Good heavens! had I put off the reading until it was too late? The ship was far out in the open, tearing through the sea on its home-

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ward voyage. The night sounded gusty; I could hear the plash and rush of the whirling surge against the vessel's side, hissing as it swept the deck; but above all other sounds came the beat and throb of the great screw. It seemed more than ever ominous in my ear, and I began to quake with alarm lest the secret should pass from me into another's custody. Why not carry this document to the ship's stern while I still had strength, and cast it into the sea? Would it not be best after all for Gwennie? Who could foretell into whose hands the diamonds might fall? Days might go by during which, in my fever-stricken state, I might possibly remain unconscious; and during those days a dozen or more on board—or, worse still, *one*—might read the document and become possessed of the secret!

The thought drove me still more frantic. Surely my friend Simon Pepworth was mad when he committed his secret to writing! But it was too late for regrets now—too late! I closed my eyes, and for a while sat motionless, making every effort to overcome my delirious fears; and at last I grew more calm. Again I opened my eyes to regard the page.

Yes, I could decipher the writing now; every word was wonderfully distinct; my eyesight seemed of a sudden to have cleared. The document was fairly brief and plainly indited; and I soon consigned to my memory every word of it. And now I felt as elated as if I had quaffed a bumper of champagne. The secret was my own—would be my own—the moment I had cast this document over the vessel's stern, as I had promised Pepworth I would do.

But as I sprang up with the firm resolve to keep my word, a sudden dizziness came over me, and the document fell from my grasp. I made a desperate effort to pick it up; but the cabin appeared to have become suddenly dark, and all sense of my surroundings, except of that overpowering beat of the screw, had fled from me; and then even that sense vanished away into silence as I gradually sank prostrate on the cabin floor.

Upon recovering consciousness I found that it was broad day. The light looked in at the round cabin window with dazzling brightness; but when my eyes had become accustomed to the glare I stared wonderingly around. I was lying snugly enough in my berth; but when I tried to lift myself upon my elbow I discovered that I was too weak to move an inch off my pillows. I lay with my hands feebly clasped behind my head and endeavoured to collect and formulate my scattered thoughts. All that had happened slowly recurred—all that had happened under the cabin lamp—the waking and the reading of the document entrusted to me by Simon Pepworth—came crowding in upon me.

What impressed me most, however, was the uncanny stillness on board. Had I lost all sense of hearing? No; for my long-drawn respiration

fell distinctly upon my ear. The silence aboard was actual. Even the screw was at rest; not even the sound of a footstep on deck! The steamer lay as motionless and tranquil as a ship in port. In port? How could that be? Last night—surely last night—the vessel was out of sight of port.

Stay! Wasn't that the sound of a footstep in the corridor outside? 'Is any one there?' I cried.

The feebleness of my voice startled me. What could it mean?

The cabin door was quietly opened and the ship's doctor came in.

'Ah, my young friend!' said he cheerily, 'how goes it now?'

He seated himself beside the berth while speaking, touched my wrist professionally, and looked with unmistakable concern into my face.

'Doctor, what does all this mean?'

'What does all that mean?' said he.

'This absence of all noise, and'—

'You've been ill, like to die,' was the answer; 'just lingering for days between life and death. Let me advise you not to talk. You'—

'For days? How many days?'

'A fortnight this morning.'

'Mercy upon me! Have we reached Liverpool?'

The doctor nodded. 'Thirty-six hours ago.'

'Let me get up; let me get up!'

'Hush!' and the doctor put his hand entreatingly upon my shoulder. 'I'm going to mix you a sleeping-draught now. Time enough to talk about getting up to-morrow.'

I felt too exhausted for further words. The news that I had been for days without the least knowledge of what was going on around me acted as a great shock. The doctor scarcely seemed puzzled, however, at the pitiable state of agitation into which I had fallen; he doubtless attributed it entirely to physical weakness. The sedative which he hastened to administer had the desired effect; for I soon fell into a sound sleep, from which I did not wake till after sunrise upon the day following.

Now came the one dread thought: What had become of the Pepworth document? Into whose possession had it fallen? If into unscrupulous hands, the diamonds had—could I doubt it!—been already unearthed and spirited away! Lying there, I looked helplessly round the little cabin—looked round in blank despair. Had I by chance, during a delirious moment, gone upon deck and thrown the document over the ship's stern? I had seemed to do so a hundred times since that night upon which I broke the seal. But I could remember nothing clearly, not even my hundred and one hideous dreams. Yet I could not realise that the thing had vanished; and so soon as I grew stronger—strong enough to creep from my bunk—I made diligent search for it from cabin roof to

floor, but no trace of it anywhere—not even the oblong envelope which had held it—could I discover. It had, in some mysterious way, vanished!

Every hour of my convalescence, while resting in my cabin berth, I strove to recall to mind every thought or action upon that memorable night when I broke the seal and forced myself to read the Pepworth document. I recalled to mind peering in upon my fellow-passenger in the starboard bunk; I recalled to mind how that overmastering dizziness had seized me and the document had dropped from my hand. What had happened subsequently? That was the question which perplexed and mystified me to the point of madness! If I had not cast the packet over the ship's stern, as projected—if it had rested upon the cabin floor after I lapsed into unconsciousness—in whose hands was it now? All the passengers, as well as a large portion of the ship's crew, had left the vessel, and were already scattered to the four winds. If the document had fallen into honest hands would it not have been given back to me, or at least placed among the papers in the unlocked valise at my berth-side? But no reference whatsoever had been made to it. The ship's doctor obviously had no knowledge of its existence; and I grew convinced that reticence was the wisest course for me to pursue—the wisest at least until I had gained sufficient strength to make the journey to London and act for myself.

One day, however, the doctor nearly succeeded in winning my confidence.

'Mr Sherwood,' said he, with his hand upon my shoulder, 'you've something on your mind. Can I do nothing for you? This mental worry is retarding your recovery, and'—

'Something is troubling me,' said I. 'By-the-bye, where was I found when I lost my wits? It was in the dead of night—that I do know; but was it here or on deck, or?'—

'Here,' said the doctor; 'on the floor of this cabin.'

'You're sure,' said I tentatively, 'that I wasn't near the ship's stern? I have got it into my head that I was watching the water churned into foam by the ship's screw.'

'Ah! you raved about that; you had got the screw on the brain,' said the doctor; 'and more than once you struggled to leave your berth and go on deck. I gathered from your half-coherent words that you wanted to throw something—I could never make out what it was—overboard. It was quite piteous.'

There was a moment's pause. Then I said, 'Who was the first to enter this cabin after I became insensible?'

'Who? Why, the second-mate,' said the doctor. 'He heard a groan as he passed the door, and he looked in upon you.'

'What's his name?'

'The second-mate's? Why, Gedge—Edward Gedge.'

'Is he aboard?'

'No. He started yesterday for New York.'

'New York! Pray, tell me, did he find no—speak of having found nothing—I mean, on this cabin floor?'

'Nothing, as far as I know,' said the doctor, smilingly, 'except yourself. He lifted you into your bunk and then sent for me.' Then the doctor added, as he looked keenly into my face, 'You have lost something you value greatly. That's what is worrying you—isn't it?'

I made no answer. A sense of dread certainty came over me, and I could not trust myself to speak. Edward Gedge, the absent mate, was the man who had become possessed of the Pepworth document. After he had placed me in my bunk, the document had caught his eye, and he had quickly discovered its worth. For was there not indicated therein the place where a dead man's diamonds, valued at half-a-million pounds sterling, had been stowed away? The discovery had staggered the man; the prize thus flashed before his eyes had proved too dazzling. Half-a-million! Yes; and then—then he had gone to the place indicated, had secured the diamonds, and had taken flight!

I left my cabin on the following day, though by no means fully restored to health, and started for London. The moment the train left Liverpool Station I took from an inner pocket the one thing left me—a thing that in my heart I prized far more than the Pepworth document—her photograph. Not that it was by any means the first time I had taken it out—by any means the first time I had gazed in admiration of the lovely face. I had long ago learnt to regard it as my ideal, to look upon it as a man might look upon the portrait of the woman he loves. I had begun to weave round this same portrait a halo of romance, in truth, before I had actually realised that she—Gwennie—was Simon Pepworth's niece. I had seen it lying upon Pepworth's study-table at Buenos Ayres before I came to know the merchant intimately, before he elected to bestow the portrait upon me as a dying gift. I now regarded it as a legacy—a priceless one; for I nursed the belief—vain fool that I was!—that in this delicate action on his part he had willed Gwennie Pepworth—her sweet self—to me.

I was alone in the railway carriage. I had bribed the guard to let me remain undisturbed during the journey; for the moment had come—a moment that I had delayed in facing until it could be delayed no longer. The moment had come for grappling with the bare and repulsive facts. The needful courage had been wanting; until now I had dreaded to admit that something more disastrous than the purloining of the Pepworth document—if anything could be more disastrous—had overtaken me: my memory had

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failed. It was useless to hide the truth from myself an hour longer. The acute attack of fever aboard ship had, in some inexplicable way, benumbed my brain and stolen from my recollection every word—every word from first to last—contained in the Pepworth document.

In the hurried moment of parting, Pepworth had assured me that every requisite detail with regard to the diamonds would be therein found. Not only should I learn their place of concealment; I should be informed as to the name and address, with many other particulars, of his legal adviser in London, a man in whom I might place every reliance; I should be informed—and this gave me the most concern—as to the whereabouts in London of his niece—the beautiful girl to whom he had willed all his great wealth—Gwennie Pepworth.

How fervently I hoped and believed, as I grew stronger, that my memory touching these details, which I knew had been set down in the document, would be restored! But I had hoped hitherto in vain. The dark spot in my brain—as I felt forced to call it—still remained unilluminated. When would the light succeed in penetrating there? I shrank even now from the self-imposed task of contemplation! Each night, during my tedious recovery, I had settled down in my bunk with an eager longing for sleep that the morrow might come the sooner—the morrow which must make all clear to me once more. Would the new life—the whirl and tumult of the vast Metropolis—stir into activity that corner of my memory which still lay dormant?

It was night. The train was rattling along in hot haste; and at last the dull-red glow reflected in the distant sky, like the reflected glow from some enormous forge, gave indications that London would soon be reached. I lowered the carriage window and gazed out upon this expanse of lamplit night in blank dismay; for where in all this vast and brightly-lighted area into which I was being borne with reckless speed was Gwennie's home?

As I drove through the streets of London that night to my hotel, the cry, 'I shall never find her!' broke from me; for at this moment I felt like one struck blind. I was groping hopelessly in the dark; but suddenly a bright thought came to me. I raised the trap-door in the cab roof and said, 'Nearest telegraph-office.' I determined to despatch a message to the shrewdest friend I knew, with the intention of seeking his advice; and the resolve brought with it a ray of hope. An hour later, while passing to and fro in my bedroom at a central hotel, waiting anxiously for his answer, a telegram was placed in my hand. It ran as follows:

'Shall expect you to-night.—BUCKMASTER.'

Stepping into a cab, I was rapidly taken in the direction of Tottenham Court Road. My search for Gwennie Pepworth had already begun—for Gwennie and her diamonds.

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The house at which the cab presently stopped was quaintly situated. The entrance was at the corner of an ill-lighted street, while the front part of the building stood in a brightly-lit thoroughfare. The ground floor of this house was occupied by a big firm of goldsmiths and pawnbrokers, their shop windows brilliant with jewellery of every description. The door in the dark street had no knocker, but I found a button which communicated upon pressure with an electric bell. A tall, broad-shouldered manservant answered the summons.

'Mr Buckmaster in?'

He led the way along a passage and up a flight of stairs. Here was a landing where there was a lamp resting on a bracket. The servant opened a door facing me, and I now passed into a room luxuriously furnished. But there was one odd thing about it: the blinds of the large bay-window were drawn up, and the room was entirely lighted by the glare from the great thoroughfare upon which it looked out. A close-shaven man, with straight eyebrows that seemed to add keenness to his small dark eyes, was seated there, so that the light was thrown directly upon his face and well-knit figure.

'Well?' said he, rising to greet me. 'You want my help—do you? You're welcome, my boy. What's the affair? Love, or?'

'An affair,' I interposed, glancing about me, 'that will need the utmost secrecy. If—if we should be overheard'—

'Ah! I see,' said Buckmaster, 'you are in a highly nervous state. Ill? Well, in that case, wouldn't you be happier if we went for an hour's rattle over the highways? We shan't be overheard out there,' and he waved his hand towards the window. 'Most of my clients tell me their secrets in hansom-cabs. Besides,' he added, with a shrewd look, 'I can glance about me and get ideas. I generally meet with my best notions out there in that noise and glitter.'

We passed into the street, and Buckmaster hailed a cab.

'Well,' said he as we drove along, 'what is it all about?'

'I'll tell you,' said I, 'in two words. I've lost recollection as to the whereabouts of half-a-million pounds.'

'In notes or gold?'

'Neither. In diamonds,' said I; 'so I thought I'd look you up, old friend.'

Buckmaster's features underwent no change of expression. His quick eye shifted unceasingly from one side to the other of the busy thoroughfares we traversed: he seemed to miss nobody, to lose sight of nothing, in the crowd; and yet it was my face, as I felt, that was all the while the object of the keenest interest to him.

'Try a cigar,' said he, producing a well-stocked case. 'You'll find these excellent.'

I lit a cigar. I had sought the counsel of this friend fully resolved to keep nothing from him.



Besides, Buckmaster possessed almost mesmeric power, as he well knew, in the way of winning one's confidence. All my reticence vanished. I told him everything—everything at least that had happened as far as I could remember—with regard to the Pepworth document and its unaccountable disappearance, not even keeping back one thought which might help to elucidate the mystery.

'Ah! So there's a lady in the affair—is there?'

'Yes; and if I could only remember where she lives.'

'Stop a minute!' said Buckmaster. 'There are three questions to consider before that—questions of far greater importance.'

'More importance than'—

'Yes, my boy. In the first place, then, did you throw the document over the ship's stern? In the second place, supposing you did *not*, but left it where it fell upon your cabin floor—was it appropriated by Gedge, the second-mate?'

'Well! and in the third place?'

'Thirdly, did your fellow-passenger—the man in the starboard bunk—wake up and grab the document before the mate entered the cabin?'

'That's it, Buckmaster,' said I; 'that's it, in a nutshell.'

Buckmaster nodded. 'We'll tackle the last question first,' said he. 'What did you say was the name of the man who slept in the starboard berth, behind that convenient red curtain?'

'Wildreck,' said I.

'Now, what do you know about *him*?'

'Nothing, and I could learn nothing, except,' said I, 'that he took train to London upon the morning on which the *La Plata* reached Liverpool.'

'But what was he like?'

'I've no recollection,' was my reply.

'No? And yet,' said Buckmaster, 'you looked at him—studied his face closely under the cabin lamp before breaking open the sealed envelope—didn't you?'

'Yes; it was the first and last time I ever saw him. His look repelled me; that's all I can recall. I've forgotten every feature of the man's face, as I have forgotten every word written in the Pepworth document.'

'Ah! Now, I wonder,' said Buckmaster, looking with greater keenness at the passers-by in the crowded streets—'I wonder if you'd know him if brought face to face with him once more?'

'I can only hope so,' said I.

'Well, don't lose heart, my boy. Keep a keen lookout.'

The days that now went by—interminable days of waiting for some word or even sign from Buckmaster—were passed by me in futile wanderings through London. I kept a keen out-

look, as my friend had suggested, but no face in the streets recalled the face of Wildreck, my fellow-passenger. But there was another face—the face of Gwennie Pepworth—that I was far more eager to discover there.

More than a week had gone by since my midnight drive with Buckmaster, when, one afternoon, a strange thing happened. I had passed aimlessly out of Fleet Street into Fetter Lane. In my wearisome peregrinations I had adopted no plan, but had roamed without premeditation; and this afternoon, for no motive that was to me in the least apparent, I found myself passing from Fetter Lane through an old and narrow gateway like an unguarded entrance leading into some prison-yard; and presently I discovered the place to be an ancient Inn of Chancery, with two other narrow gateways, each in a separate court or quadrangle, and each giving access into a separate and noisy thoroughfare. Here it was, however, delightfully silent and deserted, with a diminutive, railed-in garden on one side; and I felt irresistibly tempted to pace to and fro within the quiet precincts. Something—I could not yet find words to express the strange sensation—impelled me to linger here. It seemed, in some inexplicable way, that I had entered these precincts once before. But when? That was the question which floated through my mind and filled my thoughts with a confused sense of expectation too perplexing for words. Until now—though London was not absolutely unknown to me—I had never dreamt that this quaint corner had any existence. Yet stay! Could it have been, by any remote chance, that in the Pepworth document a description of this legal retreat had been set down for my special guidance?

As the surmise came upon me—almost, as it seemed to me, at the very same moment—a soft and hurried footstep caught my ear. I glanced round. A girl, in a tight-fitting coat and a bewitching 'Gainsborough,' glided across the court towards the gateway leading into Chancery Lane. But it was the face, the expression in the girl's eyes as she glanced at me in passing, that riveted my gaze and set my heart beating fast, and brought a name to my lips: 'Gwennie!'

## CHAPTER II.

### THE SEALED PACKET.



SPRANG impulsively forward, but the girl took no heed; or, if she heeded me, she made no sign unless it were to hasten her steps. Now a mist rose before my eyes, my strength seemed leaving me, and I was compelled to clutch at the garden railing to save myself from falling.

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Before I could recover sufficiently to speak the girl had passed out at the Chancery Lane entrance and was out of sight. The moment I could stagger across the court I went after her, but although I looked eagerly in every direction beyond the gateway, and up and down each thoroughfare, no glimpse of her was visible; she had vanished.

I turned back into the old Inn, crushed and disconsolate, and again commenced pacing to and fro. This place had come to have a still more strange and haunting effect upon me; the very flagstones and antique walls seemed to possess, as it were, some magnetic force that attracted me. Or was it an atmosphere of romance, wafted there by *her* presence, creeping over the neglected garden and an antique quadrangle, and penetrating the open doorways that led to the various floors of the time-worn, winding stairs?

It was growing dusk, and as I peered around, staring up those staircases, and studying with unwonted curiosity every name that I found painted beside their arched and grimy entrances, my look of a sudden became fixed upon a name that sent an electric shock into my brain: 'Mr Whitsmith, second floor.' My head began to throb, and for some moments I could again feel the vibrations of the great screw, and hear its shuddering pulsations beating in my ear. It seemed as though I were again aboard the steamship—again in my lamp-lit cabin—with the opening words in the Pepworth document passing before my eyes! Whitsmith! Yes, that was clearly the name of the lawyer, the name of Gwennie Pepworth's guardian; and this was the place Simon Pepworth had notified in black and white—notified as the place I was to seek out the instant I reached London.

I stood in a state of abject bewilderment at the foot of the stairs. How could I have the effrontery to face her guardian—without the diamonds? I could not admit to him that the Pepworth document was lost unless my detective friend Buckmaster worked miracles for me. I walked up and down in the fast-gathering twilight—walked up and down until the night had entirely closed in. A solitary gas-lamp in the court flickered dimly. I was fiercely striving to pierce my way into the pages of that document, but no effort would yet carry my recollection as to the wording of it beyond the name of Whitsmith, Gwennie's chosen guardian, whom I was instructed to visit. Beyond that point in my memory an impenetrable black shadow, as it were, seemed cast.

At last I turned in at the entrance and went, like one only half-wakened out of a dream, up the creaking stairs that led to Mr Whitsmith's door. However, I roused myself by a desperate effort of will when I reached the second landing, and knocked deliberately, though the sound sent a tremor through me; and it is not improbable that I should have attempted to escape from 1900.]

this ordeal—have taken to flight—had not the summons been promptly answered.

An elderly, benevolent-faced gentleman looked out abruptly upon me.

'Mr Whitsmith?' I ventured to ask.

'Why, yes,' was the answer, given in a cheery voice—'yes. And pray what can I do for you?'

His whole manner, as well as his tone, was really so genial and reassuring that the panic which my imagination had created quickly subsided.

'I have called to see you,' said I, 'at the special request of the late Mr Pepworth. You'—

'Pepworth? Bless me!—not Simon Pepworth?'

'Yes. I'—

'Pray come in.'

A door on the opposite side of the little square lobby stood invitingly open, revealing a cosy, green-panelled sitting-room. I stepped in, followed by Mr Whitsmith.

'One moment,' said he, with an incipient air of mystery as he closed the sitting-room door; you are—I suppose you are—the engineer, Mr John Sherwood?'

'That is my name. I'—

'Stop! Perhaps,' said Mr Whitsmith, crossing over to an open bureau on which stood a shaded lamp, 'we shall do well to prove your identity—it's a mere matter of form—before we proceed a step further. As the late Mr Pepworth's lawyer my position is one of responsibility. Will you sit down?'

Mr Whitsmith placed a chair for me at the desk, and then went on.

'Now,' said he, 'write your name—your ordinary signature—across this slip of paper. That will settle the question.'

'As to my identity?'

'Yes.'

When I had written my name and handed it to Mr Whitsmith, not without some show of nervousness and misgiving, his smile quickly put me once more at my ease.

'I've got your signature in that tin box,' said he, pointing to one marked S. P. among a row of tin boxes, 'in which I keep the late Mr Simon Pepworth's deeds and other papers. Now, come and take this arm-chair at my fireside. You are John Sherwood beyond any reasonable doubt, and I am delighted to make your acquaintance. I've been looking forward to this meeting—looking anxiously forward to it—for many a day. We have affairs of some moment to talk over and arrange. Take this chair.'

When I had taken the arm-chair indicated, and had sunk back into it with every attempt to appear at home, I felt more than ever, in my own secret heart, disposed to seek refuge in flight. For what would this man's attitude be towards me—this lawyer with his sense of responsibility



—when he knew, as he soon must know, the whole truth?

For the moment, however, I was safe. He had apparently no thought to discuss the affairs of Simon Pepworth to-night, and I gradually regained confidence. A delightful sense of restfulness came over me; I felt that my wanderings through the London streets in quest of Gwennie Pepworth had come to an end. Beside this bright fire, with the window curtains closely drawn, and with no lamplight except the shaded one upon the bureau, I was almost jubilant—for the hour. I should be taken and introduced to Gwennie on the morrow, at latest, by her excellent guardian. Of this I had not a shadow of doubt; and I had difficulty in hiding the sense of pleasure which the prospect held out, in spite of every contingency, in spite of the desolation that threatened me in the near future.

'Where are you staying?' said the lawyer. 'With friends, or?'—

I mentioned my hotel.

'Ah! We must get you into more homely quarters. You look far from strong,' said Mr Whitsmith with concern. 'You've not been ill, I hope?'

'Very ill,' I said. 'During the later part of the voyage—so the doctor told me—I was lingering between life and death.'

'Dear me! Perhaps,' said the lawyer, glancing from me towards the tin box—'perhaps I oughtn't to trouble you at present—at least for a day or two—about this matter of Simon Pepworth, deceased. And yet the business is urgent.'

'I could hardly yet bear the fatigue,' said I wearily. 'Still, of course, if you insist'—

He placed his hand soothingly upon my shoulder. 'Don't be uneasy! I've only one word to say. Will you allow me? Then we'll dismiss the subject until you're strong enough to give me your undivided attention.'

While speaking he lifted the deed-box marked S. P. upon the centre-table, and then he began to pace up and down, rattling a bunch of keys in his hand.

'Mr Sherwood,' said he, pausing to tap the tin box impressively, 'my instructions from Simon Pepworth about a certain sealed packet which I've got locked up here are very puzzling—so puzzling that at certain moments I've felt sorely tempted—I wouldn't for a pension confess it to any one but you—sorely tempted to solve the riddle by breaking the seal.'

His words set my heart beating fast.

'A sealed packet! May I see it?'

Mr Whitsmith looked thoughtfully at the tin box.

'Why, yes. I can raise no objection—no, none whatever; for it concerns you deeply—concerns you no less than myself.'

He at once proceeded to unlock the box, drew forth a packet, and placed it in my hand.

At sight of it I had started to my feet with an involuntary cry upon my lips; for so closely did the packet resemble the blue oblong envelope—the envelope which had contained the Pepworth document entrusted to me—that for one delirious moment I believed that I again held it in my grasp. Even the superscription, '*Re Simon Pepworth, deceased,*' written across it in bold caligraphy, closely resembled the one once possessed by me; and the size of the packet was identically the same. But when I came to examine it more narrowly, I discovered that the seal set upon this one had seemingly never been touched. How, then, could it be the same? The seal to my own packet had been broken by me; my memory was clear on that point. What, then, could this sealed packet—a packet that now suggested a duplicate copy—possibly denote?

The question was on my lips, but Mr Whitsmith's eye, bent keenly upon me, as I fancied, stemmed the impulse. Without word or comment I handed the packet back.

He placed it in the tin box and turned the key upon it, and I sank into my chair again with a suppressed sense of momentary relief. I certainly had not yet the needful strength to tackle a matter so ominous as this one already threatened to prove. In a day or two, as he had proposed, I might have braced myself to face the ordeal, but I was not prepared to face it yet.

'Now,' said the lawyer, with a wave of his hand, as if to dismiss from his mind the tin box and all it contained, 'what do you say to joining us at dinner to-night? I need hardly tell you that you will be made more than welcome.'

'You mean?'—I said tentatively.

'Why, at Guilford Street, of course,' said the lawyer, nodding good-humouredly. 'We dine at seven.'

I hastened back to my hotel to dress for dinner, but before going up to my room I consulted the London Directory. By good chance I found the name of Whitsmith (below the name of Clixby) at 83A Guilford Street, Bloomsbury. I was elated at my discovery, and as I drove along a sense of expectation, strange and indefinable, came over me. What was it? I feared to give rein to my thought, for the half-awakened fancy might end in nought.

A neat maid-servant who came to the door led me unquestioningly upstairs, and announced me as 'Mr Sherwood.'

I stepped into the room—a large drawing-room. Standing over the hearth and rubbing his hands together in a sportful sort of manner was Mr Whitsmith. He looked round over his shoulder at me as I came in with a nod and a welcoming smile.

'Ah! you've found your way to the old house—have you?'

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'Why, yes! And do you know, Mr Whit-smith,' said I, looking curiously round the room, 'I somehow think, or else I've dreamed it, I must have been here before.'

'Think so, do you?' and Mr Whit-smith chuckled as though he regarded my observation in the light of a joke.

Again I looked round me. The drawing-room had panelled walls, painted grey, with many water-colour drawings of scenes in the Brazils—scenes which I knew well. The furniture was old-fashioned, of the style in vogue a century ago. There was an inner room beyond, its folding-door standing open; here there was a piano, and vases of flowers tastefully arranged—arranged by a woman's delicate hand, as I felt little doubt. Indeed, while Mr Whit-smith and I were still talking, the door of this inner or music room opened, and a tall girl glided in. She was simply clad in an evening-dress, something of a crimson silky texture, with no ornament save a diamond necklace about her full and shapely throat. She came smilingly towards the lawyer, who advanced from the hearth with outstretched hands.

'Gwennie,' said he, 'this is Mr Sherwood, your uncle Pepworth's friend, from Buenos Ayres.'

I took the hand she held out to me, and looked wonderingly into her face. It was the girl who had crossed the twilight Inn—the girl I had pursued and lost sight of in Chancery Lane—barely three hours ago.

We dined, as I well recall, in a cosy back room downstairs. The table was laid for four, and upon entering the room we found a stiff-necked, elderly lady, prim and respectful to the point of irony, awaiting us there. She seated herself at the head of the table; she seemed to claim the place as one to which she had an exclusive right. I found myself seated opposite to Gwennie.

At dinner Mr Whit-smith took occasion to relate how seriously ill I had been during the homeward voyage, and I gained more than one sympathetic glance from the girl before the recital was over. But Mrs Clixby, as I understood the stiff-necked lady to be, appeared the while to be regarding me furtively; there seemed an expression of incredulity or doubt in her sphinx-like attitude. I could almost imagine that her thin lips shaped themselves into the unspoken words, 'I have my suspicions.' Presently, when she addressed the lawyer—she pointedly avoided addressing me—her remark filled me with uneasiness at first.

'I needn't remind you, sir,' said she, 'that the parlour is vacant. He has come to London to stop a while, I should hope. He ain't going to run away to-morrow; and if it's looking after he requires, or watching'—

'A capital suggestion,' said the lawyer. 'What do you say, Mr Sherwood?'

'What do I say?'

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'Ah! let me explain,' said Mr Whit-smith. 'This house belongs to the Pepworth estate, and Mrs Clixby is our tenant. Being a lady of social proclivities, she has very sensibly decided to sublet two or three floors, for the house is a large one. Our kind hostess is a widow without family, excepting a married daughter who resides abroad. Mr Pepworth, as you are aware, had rooms here'—

'Not vacant just now,' the landlady interposed.

'Precisely; and Gwennie, being a young lady of fortune,' said the lawyer in a tone of pleasantry, 'occupies the drawing-room floor. For my part, I've a bachelor suite on the top floor, which I haven't used, except as a store-room for books and bundles of old law-papers, for quite an age. It crossed my mind to have the rooms cleared out and fitted up for you. But Mrs Clixby has reminded me that the parlours chance to be unoccupied at the moment, and you couldn't do better, therefore, than settle down in them during your stay in town.'

I now turned to Mrs Clixby with a sense of relief and said, 'Would to-morrow be too soon to have my luggage sent over from the hotel?'

Mrs Clixby persisted in addressing Mr Whit-smith, as though the question had come from him.

'As you know, sir, an hour's notice is all I ever need. To-morrow will suit me perfectly.'

I forgave her disregard of me—would have forgiven her had she openly denounced me as a suspicious character; for by placing the parlours at my disposal she was bringing me near to Gwennie. Yes—I was going to reside beneath the same roof with her! The prospect filled me with delight, and the very thought of it drove from my mind for the moment all the rankling uncertainty concerning the safety of the dead man's diamonds and the dread ordeal which must sooner or later be faced.

Every detail connected with that evening passed in Gwennie's drawing-rooms has impressed itself upon my mind as no event in my life has done before or ever can do hereafter. She entertained us in a blithe, enchanting manner. She sang for us a number of songs, sprightly and sublime, and played to us nocturnes and sonatas in a style that an artiste could not have surpassed; and that evening I fell in love.

For a brief half-hour, while Mr Whit-smith had the complacency to doze over one of the nocturnes, and Mrs Clixby was constrained to give attention to an affair below-stairs, I had her entirely to myself. I drew my chair closer to the piano, and while her fingers went melodiously over the keys, making her soft voice seem the softer, she said, 'I have been wondering, Mr Sherwood, why you walked up and down, up and down, in front of that old garden this afternoon'—

'You saw me?'

'Looking so deep in thought—so deeply meditative—instead of coming upstairs to Mr Whitsmith's rooms,' she went on.

'But'——

'I wondered who you could be,' she said. 'I never dreamt, of course, that the sedate gentleman pacing the court like a sentinel could be my uncle Pepworth's friend, and that I should meet him to-night as I have had the pleasure of doing.'

'Miss Pepworth,' said I, looking into her bright face, 'may I tell you what I was actually thinking about?'

'Yes, pray do,' said she, 'if it's no secret. I am all curiosity to know.'

'Shall I not offend you?'

'No. I can't believe that possible.'

'Well, then,' said I, 'to tell you the truth, strange as it may seem, I was thinking about—you.'

'Me? How strange! I'——

At this moment Mrs Clixby re-entered the drawing-room, and presently Mr Whitsmith opened his eyes. Any further talk between us to-night was now impossible; it was growing late, and I caught the landlady's gaze upon me—which seemed to mean that at this hour a convalescent ought to be abed; so I lingeringly bade them 'Good-night.'

I skilfully contrived to put off my interview with the worthy lawyer for some days. I pleaded indisposition, and not without some truth. I visited no one, not even Buckmaster.

But when I had got thoroughly settled down in the parlours at Guilford Street, Mr Whitsmith cornered me. I could find no plausible excuse for further delay; and one autumn afternoon, when the leaves were falling from the old trees in Clifford's Inn, and the wind was going gustily about the courts and staircases, I mounted the steps once more to Mr Whitsmith's floor. He was there, waiting for me; and when he had let me in and welcomed me with his wonted show of cordiality, he placed a chair for me near the bright fire. Then he lighted the shaded lamp and drew the window-curtains close, shutting out the gleam of murky daylight that still remained. Every word and every action on Mr Whitsmith's part during that interview has clung to my recollection ever since.

He now lifted the tin box—the one with Pepworth's initials upon it—once more upon the table; then he unlocked it, raised the lid, and looked inside. He appeared deeply thoughtful; and I kept silent, waiting for him to speak.

'When Mr Pepworth gave me this sealed packet,' said he, drawing it out and turning it over in his hands, 'he was on the eve of starting from London on what proved to be his last journey to Buenos Ayres. It is now about a year ago. He told me when leaving that, should he die abroad, I was to break this seal and carry out the instructions given here.'

A sense of suspense, in which was mingled hope and fear, now came over me.

'Then,' the lawyer went on, 'came a letter from Mr Pepworth, only a few weeks ago, giving me to understand that he was placing with you, under seal, a similar document to this one. Have I been rightly informed?'

'Similar to that one?' said I. 'Maybe! But if you will break the seal and allow me to glance through the contents I shall better be able to answer whether it is so or not. I can tell you one thing, however. When dying, upon the night on which I took passage by the steamship *La Plata* from Buenos Ayres, Mr Pepworth entrusted to my care a packet—an oblong blue packet duly sealed, resembling, to all outward appearance, the one you at this moment are turning over in your hand.'

'Ah! that is all I have need to know. The contents are the same. I will answer for that.'

He came over to the hearth while speaking, and seating himself in a chair close beside the glowing fire, looked into it with a strangely concentrated look.

'Break the seal!' cried I excitedly. 'Let me read the contents; let me see if all that is written there is the same—the same'——

'Break the seal?' said Mr Whitsmith in a slow, deliberative tone. 'Yes—that's the point I am coming to now. One moment.'

His look became more concentrated than before. Then he went on:

'If I were to break the seal and let you read what's written here, you could no doubt say—could you not?—whether what I hold here is a duplicate of the document given by Mr Pepworth to you?'

'Yes, certainly, I could tell you that. Why?'

'On your word, Mr Sherwood!' said Mr Whitsmith earnestly; 'you are sure—absolutely sure?'

'Yes. I broke the seal of my packet one night aboard ship,' said I, my heart sinking within me, 'and read the document from first to last.'

'Ah! that's what I wanted to know,' said Mr Whitsmith; 'for it is all I was instructed to ask you. And now I will carry out my orders from Mr Pepworth without more delay. You, Mr Sherwood—you are the chosen witness to my act and deed. Look!'

He then bent forward, and before I could utter a protest he had thrust the sealed packet deep among the glowing coals.

With a cry of wild despair, I sprang up and made a frantic effort to save it from the blaze. But it was too late. The packet had already burst into flames.

I reeled towards Mr Whitsmith, conscious of a mad flash in my eye as the hoarse whisper broke from my lips:

'Great heavens! Do you know what you've done?'

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## CHAPTER III.

## THE LOCKED DOOR.



My panic-stricken tone and attitude seemed to stagger him. As soon as he could recover voice Mr Whit-smith said :

'I've done my duty. Can you suppose that I wantonly destroyed that sealed packet?'

'No; you could not know—it may be days before you realise—the injury you have done me, and still more Mr Pepworth's niece.'

He listened to my words in blank surprise. 'Done her an injury? I hope not. Yet, perhaps I ought to have explained my motive more fully—more lucidly—before destroying that packet. Perhaps'—

'Explain it now,' said I entreatingly; 'let me hear why you have done this.'

'I will; and I shall soon convince you,' said he confidently, 'that I have religiously followed out the instructions given me by my client.'

'What! By Mr Pepworth?'

'Yes. The moment you reached England, the moment you reported yourself to me,' said the lawyer, 'and the moment I had ascertained that you, as agreed, had broken open the sealed packet, Mr Sherwood, and had digested the contents of the document placed therein, I was instructed by Mr Pepworth to burn the packet placed by him in my hands without opening it.'

'Go on,' said I, pressing my hands to my head.

'You have reached England, you have reported yourself to me,' he went on, 'and you have given me your assurance that you have made yourself acquainted with all the information that packet contained. Now, that being so—learning from you that you have done this—all that remained for me to do was what I have just done—destroy my packet in your presence.'

'Well?'

'It was a fac-simile of the document handed to you under seal by Mr Pepworth when dying, and that fac-simile was merely sent to me as a safeguard, so to speak. It was sent in order to enable me to act for Mr Pepworth in case the ship in which you took passage from Buenos Ayres should be lost.'

'Ah! Had the *La Plata* been lost, or had I died during the voyage, you would never have destroyed that packet?'

'No. I should have broken the seal and mastered the contents, if'—

Once more I started up from my chair. The dread that had been working in my brain at last found expression in words.

'You knew nothing of the contents?'

'Nothing,' said he. 'Not one word.'

His answer came like a stab, and I sank  
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beneath it as though I had been wounded mortally. A moment ago I could have learnt the place—the secret place—in which the dead man's diamonds were stowed away, and now it could never be! Gwennie's fortune was irretrievably lost.

My health was still feeble; the shock was too severe; and now a sense of intense faintness came over me; I passed into unconsciousness once more.

For some days I remained in a state of nervous prostration. I could not leave my rooms. Mr Whit-smith looked in upon me frequently, but he never suspected the truth. He was deeply concerned about me; he did most of the talking, yet he never once referred to that interview between us in his rooms in Clifford's Inn.

Simon Pepworth's injunction to the lawyer to destroy the sealed packet the moment he had satisfied himself that I possessed the knowledge of its contents convinced me that his motive had been to constitute me sole custodian of Gwennie's fortune. If Mr Whit-smith knew—which I greatly doubted—of the existence of the diamonds, he exhibited no anxiety concerning them, never throwing out a hint on the subject. He appeared to consider my complete recovery more important than anything else, as far as I could discover; and so further days of grace were given me in which to deliberate as to the method to adopt when disclosing, as I was resolved to do, the disastrous condition of affairs.

Mrs Clixby proved herself the best of friends, for she used every device she could think of in order to throw Gwennie and myself together. I soon became confident that she could have had no serious suspicion of me, no actual knowledge of the situation in which I was placed with regard to Mr Pepworth's niece. It was at Mrs Clixby's suggestion that, as soon as I was well enough to ascend the stairs, I came to take tea in Gwennie's music-room every afternoon; and the good woman often contrived to leave us alone. So it came to pass that my love for Gwennie grew deeper and deeper, though I realised all the while that when she came to know everything she might perhaps pity me—possibly condone my want of moral courage; but her feeling towards me would really be one of supreme contempt.

One evening when Mrs Clixby came in with my tea-tray—Gwennie having gone out to pay some afternoon calls—I put a question to her which I had hitherto persistently shrunk from putting to any one, so distasteful had the very thought of the dead man's diamonds become.

'I've been wondering,' said I, 'which were Mr Pepworth's rooms in this old house.'

'Mr Pepworth's rooms, sir?' said the landlady. 'Why, I thought you knew that the dining-rooms were the ones he occupied.'

'Opposite to mine—to these rooms? I should



like to look at them when you can spare five minutes.'

'I'd spare 'em now, sir, and welcome,' said she; 'but the door's locked.'

'Locked!'

'And the key has been taken away.'

'Taken away! You don't mean by Mr Pepworth when?'

'Oh no! By a lodger,' she explained—'the gentleman I'm expecting back every day. But I've got another key to the door, if I could only lay my hands on it. Perhaps Miss Pepworth might know. I'll ask her when she comes in.'

Then she went on to tell me in a voluble manner how this gentleman had driven to the house one day in a cab with two portmanteaus and a valise, and had engaged the rooms for a month, paying her in advance; and how, on the morning after his arrival, he was called away unexpectedly on business.

'It's now three weeks ago,' she concluded. 'I fancy every cab-wheel must be his.'

'A week before I came?'

'Ten days,' said Mrs Clixby, with precision; and then, after a moment's reflection, she mentioned the day of the month.

'The 20th of September,' said I, growing suddenly interested; for by a strange—indeed it seemed to me startling—coincidence, it chanced to be the very date on which the *La Plata* had landed her passengers at Liverpool. A thought flashed into my mind.

'May I ask,' said I, 'whether these rooms of mine were also vacant when this gentleman came to inquire for apartments?'

'Yes; but he didn't seem partial to the parlours. He showed a preference for the dining-rooms—for Mr Pepworth's rooms, as I mostly call 'em.'

'He showed a preference for Mr Pepworth's rooms?'

'A very distinct preference, sir,' said she; and then she added, noticing my keen look, 'Might he happen to be known to you?'

'I wonder—I wonder if—— But what does his name chance to be?'

'Gedge.'

'Gedge!' cried I, clutching at the arms of my chair. 'Not—not Edward Gedge?'

'That is the name,' said the landlady; 'Mr Edward Gedge. Then you do know him, sir?'

What answer I gave Mrs Clixby I do not recollect. All I now know is that I instantly telegraphed to my detective friend Buckmaster: 'Call on me to-night. Very urgent.'

Within the hour, while I was standing at my parlour window looking impatiently out into the ill-lighted street, Buckmaster's inevitable hansom stopped at the door.

Buckmaster beckoned me from his cab to join him, and I went out. I was quickly on the seat at his side, and we drove as before through the great thoroughfares of the crowded city.

'Well?' said he, offering me a cigar.

We had not met since the night of my arrival in London, though I had written to him communicating my full address in Guilford Street, expressing at the same time a desire to see him; but he had given no heed to my letter beyond a line of acknowledgment.

'Well,' he reiterated, directing his keen glance unceasingly from side to side, 'have you cleared up that diamond mystery at last?'

His question was the very one which I might with reason have put to him. 'No: but I'm on that villain's track.'

'What villain?'

'The man who stole that document from the cabin,' said I. 'Have you lost your memory?'

He gave me a quick, humorous glance of reproach.

'I beg your pardon,' said I contritely.

'What man do you mean?' said he. 'That man in the starboard berth?'

'No; I mean Gedge, the second-mate. He took rooms in the house in which I am lodging on the very night of the day upon which the *La Plata* reached Liverpool.'

'Did he though? Come! that's very remarkable.'

I saw a smile flit over his face as he spoke, though what the smile meant—whether intended to express his scorn for my powers of induction—I could not then decide. But at Buckmaster's request I proceeded to relate all that had happened since we had met. I told him of my romantic encounter with Gwennie, my discovery of Mr Whitsmith, and the interview that had taken place between us—every detail connected with those days of suspense.

No word that I spoke—no look, as I well perceived—escaped my friend, and when I had finished, 'Sherwood, my boy,' said he, 'I may wire you any moment now. Keep a lookout. Be in readiness for another little drive with me; and mind, the news I shall have for you may be strange—even startling; so the quicker you get back your strength the fitter you'll be to bear it, you know, and give me help worth the having.'

No more passed between us upon the subject on that occasion, and presently I bade Buckmaster 'Good-night' at my Guilford Street door. A minute later his cab had driven out of sight.

That drive with Max Buckmaster, his masterful and no less mysterious attitude, certainly roused within me an energy and mental force such as I had not known since those days before I was stricken down with a debilitating fever aboard ship. I paced my room with a firmer and more resolute tread; my moral courage seemed of a sudden restored; and I felt that the time had arrived for Gwennie to know all.

My passion for her, the selfish dread lest I should jeopardise any remote hope I had dared

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to entertain of winning this girl, must be thrust aside. My mind was at last thoroughly made up. She should know everything—everything that it was in my power to make known—before the night was out, and then—then—

It may be that on now hearing Gwennie's step upon the stairs my good resolve did, for one perilous instant, desert me; but a moment later, when the sound of her well-known tap fell on my ear, the strength of will came back to me; I became possessed by a feverish desire to speak, and I sprang towards the door to open it and invite her in.

I had not lighted my reading-lamp, but had been pacing about by the uncertain light of a flickering fire. Gwennie had a small crystal lamp in one hand and a large key in the other. She placed them both on the table, and then, turning to me with a smile, she said:

'With Clixby's compliments. She has asked me to give them to you.'

Smiling responsively, I said, 'What masonic signs are these?'

'This key,' she answered, laying her pretty finger for a second upon it, 'opens the door to my dear old uncle's rooms. The lamp, of course, is to light you there.'

'Ah! you have found a duplicate key,' I said. 'But must I look over the rooms alone?'

'Oh no,' said she; 'if I may come and'—

'If you may?'

'I thought, perhaps,' said she hesitatingly, 'that you might wish—might have some motive for wishing to look through the rooms by yourself.'

'I have no such wish. But before we set foot together inside Mr Pepworth's rooms,' said I—'before we speak again of the worthy man who when dying sent me to you—let me entreat you to share with me a burden that I can bear no longer alone.'

'What is it?' said she, speaking scarcely above a whisper. 'Pray don't hesitate to speak. I will listen patiently.'

She sank into a seat beside my fire; and thus encouraged by her kindly look and attitude, I drew a chair to her side, and then, as it had all happened to me, from the moment of my sad leave-taking with Simon Pepworth to the moment of parting with Buckmaster an hour ago, I told my story from first to last.

Gwennie listened patiently indeed; and when I had ended—when I had unburdened my mind of all its weight of anxiety concerning the diamonds, and had expressed my fear that they never would be found—she remained silent for a while, lost in thought.

'So that was the problem,' she said at last, 'you were trying to solve when I first saw you, from Mr Whit Smith's window, walking up and down the courtyard in Clifford's Inn?'

'Yes, that was the problem,' said I; 'those diamonds and—and you.'

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For a moment she became once more thoughtful. Then she said, 'I will talk to Mr Whit Smith. May I—may I tell him everything—just as you have confided everything to me?'

'Yes, Gwennie; I'm in your hands now,' said I. 'Do what seems to you best.'

She rose and took from my table the key and the lamp.

'Shall we go there now?'

I assented, and followed her across the hall. She handed me the key, and I opened the door. She passed in and stood in the centre of the room with the lamp raised on a level with her shapely head, so that I could see the rooms more distinctly.

The Pepworth apartments consisted of two rooms. The front room in which we were standing, panelled in oak, was furnished as a study, with book-shelves and cupboards. A massive desk stood under the window that looked out upon Guilford Street. This room was connected by folding-doors with a large bedroom. The furniture was old-fashioned, like most of the furniture in this cosy old mansion. The window in the bedroom was a double-sashed casement, reaching from floor almost to ceiling, that led out into a neglected garden at the back.

While I still stood looking around me, the identical sensation which I had experienced when pacing disconsolately to and fro in the old Inn, the weird sensation of having something almost within mental grasp which I associated with these rooms, but which my clouded brain could not completely lay hold upon, began to trouble me. I pressed my hands to my head, for again I became conscious of the big vibrating screw in my throbbing ear.

'John—Mr Sherwood—are you ill?'

She hurried to my side, and with her help I staggered towards a chair and sank down.

'No, not ill. I am well—quite well, Gwennie,' I cried. 'I remember all now—everything.'

'Not,' said she, bending down to scrutinise my face—'not where the diamonds are hidden?'

'Yes!'

'Where?'

Her dark eyes brightened; a vision of the diamonds seemed to flash from them as she rose, the lamp poised in her hand.

## CHAPTER IV.

### CONCLUSION.



YES, I remembered all. As I stood there staring round the old rooms, with the girl whom I loved waiting with keen expectation for me to speak, my recollection of the Pepworth document came back to me in its graphic detail, almost word for word. I found, in a sort



of mental glance through the pages of manuscript, that I had so far carried out my friend's instructions. I had sought out Mr Whitsmith at Clifford's Inn in order to report my arrival in London; I had paid my visit—through Mr Whitsmith's inspiration, it was true—to Gwennie Pepworth at Guilford Street; and then—

'Gwennie,' said I, rising and throwing a hasty look round, 'these are the rooms, as I now recall them, that I was told by Mr Pepworth to settle down in; and then, with you as my witness, I was to bring forth the box of diamonds from its dark receptacle into the light. Those were his words.'

'But where?'

'Come this way. And—quick!—bring the lamp.'

Trembling with excitement and expectancy, I hastened into the inner room. I felt no sense of doubt or mental confusion now. I stopped near the window and looked round at the girl.

'Is the door shut?'

'Yes,' she said.

'And the front-room window,' said I—'are the curtains drawn well over it?'

'Yes; no one can look in,' she said.

'But these shutters must be closed,' said I, pointing to the back window; 'you will soon see why.'

When we had done this—had raised the iron bar and fastened the clasp—I said, 'This is the side.'

I took the lamp out of Gwennie's hand, and holding it close to a recess in which the shutter on the left-hand side had rested, ran the light up and down, examining every crack and crevice.

'Ah!' said I at last, 'that's it.'

I handed her back the lamp, and taking a penknife from my pocket, stabbed a specified point in the panel, and without difficulty extracted from it a circular piece of wood resembling the bung of a small beer-cask. At the back of the hole thus exposed—a hole about half-an-inch deep—there could be seen a little brass ring. Into this ring I now inserted my forefinger, gave a vigorous pull, and a small door opened downwards until it formed a tiny shelf, revealing a deep and dark cupboard not more than two or three feet square.

'The lamp—nearer, please!'

Gwennie placed it upon the little shelf, and I eagerly peered into this cupboard. Every corner was lighted up.

There was nothing there.

'It's gone!'

We stood staring blankly into each other's faces. At last I spoke.

'No one can doubt now,' I said, 'why Edward Gedge, the second-mate aboard the *La Plata*, engaged these rooms! The document he picked up in my cabin told him all. It's he—who has learnt the secret—has stolen those diamonds, and'—

At this moment there came a double knock at the front door, which caused me to pause. I readjusted the woodwork in the recess exactly as I had found it, and then followed Gwennie out into the hall.

The servant put a telegram into my hand. I tore it open and read as follows:

'Come without delay.—BUCKMASTER.'

I showed it to Gwennie. As she returned it she gave me a glance such as I can never forget. It inspired me with the confidence and courage of which I was so deeply in need; and then bidding her 'Good-night,' I hurried out.

It was getting late when the cab put me down at Buckmaster's door; but I noticed that the jeweller's shop was still open, still ablaze with its electric lamps that set the gems in the window sparkling enticingly. I was shown upstairs to Buckmaster's study by the man who had led the way there on the night upon which I set foot in London, now weeks ago; and I found my friend the detective seated just as I had found him on that occasion, his room lit up solely by the glare of the light outside.

'Well?'

If Buckmaster's style of greeting had irritated me at our last meeting some hours ago, his keenness and coolness of manner now irritated me still more.

'I thought,' said I, 'that you had news for me. Your telegram expresses urgency, and'—

'That's true. But,' he interposed, 'let me first of all hear your news. I can see from your face that you've something to tell me. What is it?'

I lost no time in recounting what had occurred—my visit to Pepworth's rooms, and how, in a sudden return of memory, I had had my dread confirmed that the diamonds had been spirited away by the villainous second-mate.

'You mean Edward Gedge—don't you?'

'Yes; whom else should I mean?'

Buckmaster ignored my show of temper, and rising from his chair, said, 'Come along, my boy!'

He crossed towards the door, and then paused with his hand upon it.

'So you've recovered your memory—have you?' said he. 'Let me congratulate you.'

Was he laughing at me? I looked at him with another flash of anger; but quickly mastering my irritability, I said, 'Thank you. But I don't think there's much to congratulate me about—at present. I greatly fear that I've got my memory back when it's too late to save'—

'That,' Buckmaster interposed, 'remains to be proved. Stop a minute! Have you been able yet, by-the-bye, to recall to mind the face of that fellow-passenger—I mean the man who shared your cabin aboard the *La Plata*, and slept in the starboard berth?'

'Wildreck? No, not yet.'

'Ah! But suppose that you and Wildreck

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were suddenly brought face to face, do you think you would still fail to identify him?'—

'Still I cannot say.'

'Well, follow me. But,' said Buckmaster in a low, impressive voice, 'whatever you do, if that chance of recognition should be given you—whatever happens, don't utter a sound.'

He now led the way downstairs and along a dimly-lit passage, and then pausing with his forefinger to his lips, opened a swing-door. We now stepped into a large, brightly-lighted room, like a store-room, with shelves against the walls that reached to the ceiling. These shelves were filled with packages of all sizes and shapes, and a ticket was attached to each packet. At the farther end of this room was another door, and in its upper panel was a small pane of glass.

'Look through there,' said Buckmaster, suddenly extinguishing the light.

I peered through the window, and what I saw was a pawnbroker's inner office or counting-house, and directly facing my coign of vantage were some half-dozen *clientèle* boxes or 'stalls,' each with a counter in front and a swing-door at the back. In one of these was a buxom woman, who fairly filled the place allotted, carrying on an animated discussion with one of the clerks; and in another box was a typical costermonger negotiating a loan upon a gorgeous parti-coloured silk neckerchief.

'Well,' whispered Buckmaster, 'do you see any one you recognise?'

'No.'

'Wait,' said he, holding his watch close to the window-pane. 'You'll not have to wait long now.'

While Buckmaster still spoke a flashily-dressed man appeared in one of the vacant boxes. A clerk stepped forward, and the man handed him a diminutive leathern case. The clerk opened it and held up to the light between his finger and thumb a big diamond.

But I hardly took note of this; for the customer's face had riveted my attention, and a cry would have certainly escaped me had not the grip of Buckmaster's fingers upon my wrist brought me to my senses.

'Quick!—whisper—who is it?'

'Wildreck!'

'Sure?'

'Yes, it's he. Those are the piercing black eyes that he opened on me in his sleep when lying in the starboard berth.'

A moment later, as it seemed to me—though for all I knew an hour may have passed—I found myself once more seated at Buckmaster's side in a swift-going cab, speeding along through the London streets.

'Come, my boy—come!' said Buckmaster, rousing me out of my abstraction by a sharp blow on the arm; 'collect your wits, for if you keep your head cool we shall settle this affair to-night.'

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'But why didn't you arrest him there and then?'

'He's all right—*shadowed*, you know,' said Buckmaster. 'It's the diamonds I'm thinking about.'

We had by this time reached one of the outlying northern suburbs, on the borders of a great heath. Here we alighted, and my friend dismissed the cab.

For a while we walked in silence over the dark heath. At last Buckmaster said, 'So you thought that Gedge was the culprit—did you?'

'Yes; I naturally concluded'—

'Ah! Now, I wonder,' said he, 'whether you begin to suspect what did happen?'

'No; I can only suspect,' said I, 'that Gedge and Wildreck went into partnership over this business, and'—

'There you're wrong. Gedge hadn't any hand in this affair.'

'No! Who, then, was Mrs Clixby's lodger?'

'At Guilford Street? Why, Wildreck, of course! He simply, in order to turn us off the scent, took the name of Edward Gedge. The second-mate's an honest man. I've found out that. The Pepworth document was already gone when Gedge entered your cabin.'

I expressed a keen desire to be told more, but Buckmaster said hurriedly, 'Not now. I can tell you nothing more to-night. What we've now got to do is to recover those diamonds.'

'To-night?'

'Yes,' said Buckmaster, speaking scarcely above a whisper—'recover them to-night, if my plan succeeds.'

'What plan?' cried I excitedly, for the spirit of adventure which I had acquired in Brazil was coming back.

'In the first place,' said he, 'where do you think the diamonds are now?'

'I can't imagine,' I replied.

'Under our very feet,' he said.

It had grown intensely dark out on this gusty heath; but Buckmaster had provided himself with a lantern, and he now produced it from his pocket, casting a ray of light upon the spot where we stood.

'Yes,' he went on, 'about twenty feet below. But bend down and put your ear to the ground. You'll not fail to understand what I mean.'

I obeyed; and after listening for a while a dull vibration fell upon my senses, and I fully realised the meaning of Buckmaster's words.

'Surely not there?'

'Yes; there, sure enough.'

'Where's the entrance?'

'Not five minutes' walk from here,' said Buckmaster. 'Follow me.'

In less than five minutes, after descending a somewhat steep bank, we paused beside a railway at the point where it vanished into a wide tunnel.

'Now, my boy, as a mining engineer of vast experience,' said Buckmaster, 'you will hardly

need much instruction. In fact, I can explain myself in two words. You will find lamps in the brackets placed alternately on the "up" and "down" sides against the brickwork of the tunnel. Just beyond the seventh lamp, and almost in a parallel line with it, you will discover the mark of an arrow on a brick. Remove the seventh brick below the arrow. Take this jack-knife and my lantern. You'll find the dead man's diamonds behind that brick.'

I waited for no further word, but stepped into the tunnel, leaving Buckmaster on guard at the entrance.

Groping my way through the semi-darkness, with the hollow echo of my footsteps breaking the grim silence in this damp-smelling place, I had no dread or presentiment of danger ahead. The thought of Gwennie—the thought that the chance had come to me in which to restore her fortune—put all the hopefulness and pluck into my heart that I could well desire. Besides, it was part of my calling to feel at home in underground ways and byways; and although I had been impelled to come here for the special purpose of recovering, if the thing were possible, Gwennie Pepworth's fortune, I was resolved not to let that fact lead me into undue haste. I did not fail to bear in mind that coolness in this business would prove my surest safeguard. While advancing with cautious tread, counting the lamps as I went along, I fancied that I heard a stifled cry behind me, and stopped to peer round and listen; but hearing no further sound, I continued to advance, and presently reached the seventh lamp, where I lighted upon the arrow-branded brick just beyond.

I put the lantern upon a sleeper, so that the light was thrown upon the bricks underneath, and then opening the jack-knife, I inserted the edge of the blade into a crevice on one side of the seventh brick below the arrow. It moved almost at the first touch, and with a little more skilful scooping I was rewarded by seeing the brick tumble out.

Then, as it fell, another sound less pleasing struck upon my ear. It was the muffled shriek from an engine. Again I listened, until I had assured myself that the train was on the down-line, and therefore, I being stationed on the up-line, would not interfere with my exploration. I now plunged my hand into the aperture and pulled out the first thing my fingers touched. In size and shape this thing oddly resembled the displaced brick, but upon closer examination I perceived that it was an iron box painted red, with no lock on either side. I dropped it into my pocket, confident that this must be the thing of which I was in quest, and then, lifting the lantern from the sleeper, started to find my way back to my friend's side. Now, as I turned with an irrepressible laugh of exultation on my lips, I observed a dark figure hurrying towards

me along the up-line. I levelled the light from my lantern full upon him, expecting to see the face of Buckmaster, and was struck with abject amazement when I found that it was my fellow-passenger Wildreck who confronted me. Before I had time for self-defence the lamp was knocked out of my hand and I was wrestling fiercely with the man—wrestling for my very life; for at this moment the train I had heard shrieking on its way into the tunnel came ominously in sight, and I felt sure that Wildreck's deadly intent was to throw me under it. It was a moment of inexpressible horror, more inexpressible than any nightmare through which I had ever passed. I saw a reflected glare of flame expanding in the darkness, with two red and widening bull's-eyes in advance, as the snorting engine came rushing towards us. Of a sudden Wildreck lost his footing and pitched me headforemost against an iron rail, when all sense of sight and hearing rapidly ebbed away.

When I awoke to consciousness, the light of a dim lamp was the first thing to attract my attention. My adventure in the tunnel came crowding back upon me; for a brief, agonising moment, which an acute pain in my head helped to intensify, I imagined that I was still lying on the up-line, that the lamp was Buckmaster's, and that the figure moving towards me in the semi-darkness was that of 'the man in the star-board berth.' I uttered a low cry, raised myself upon my elbow, and peered more keenly round. No, thank heaven! I was no longer there. The lamp was resting upon a low table, and feebly lighting up the Pepworth apartments; and the figure now near my bedside was one I loved.

'Gwennie!' I murmured.

She made no answer; but I felt her tender arm about me as she raised me upon my pillows, while she held some cooling drink to my lips. Presently I fell into a sound, dreamless sleep; and when I awoke the room was lit with subdued daylight, and Gwennie was no longer there.

Days went by. I was slowly recovering from the injury caused by the stunning effects of my fall. Mrs Clixby had taken Gwennie's place as attendant upon me. But one day, while resting in my chair by the fireside, I said, 'Is Miss Pepworth upstairs? I fancy I can hear her step.'

'Why, yes. Would you like to see her? I'll send her to you, sir,' said the landlady, 'for you do seem well enough for a bit o' talk with her at last.'

When she came in, looking more bright and more beautiful than ever, I hastened to express my gratitude for all the care with which I knew she had tended me.

'I have only done what any one would have done for so true a friend,' she said. 'Do you think I can ever forget the anxiety and danger you have undergone for my sake? I would rather—a hundred times rather—that the diamonds had been lost than—'

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'Gwennie! are they recovered?' I cried. 'You must know that I love you—have loved you ever since I saw you in the twilight in Clifford's Inn; but I can never, never dare hope to win even your respect until the stolen diamonds have been restored.'

'Why, John, hasn't Mrs Clixby told you,' said she, 'all that happened after you were thrown down upon the rail?'

'No! What did happen, dear?'

'I'll tell you,' said Gwennie, 'for Mr Buckmaster, who has been here repeatedly to inquire after you, told me every detail days ago.'

She then went on to relate how the detective, when fully satisfied that the second-mate had had no hand in the affair, had fixed upon Wildreck as the most likely culprit. He had then put every wheel in motion, and had presently come upon the man employed as a navvy among a small gang on a northern railway. He had then set a watch upon him night and day, and had ultimately learnt every necessary fact concerning him. This unprincipled adventurer, when putting off his workman's disguise, had occupied handsome apartments in the West End, and here he had represented himself, under the name of Armstrong, as an Australian miner who had amassed great wealth. His arrest had been arranged to take place on the very night when he was identified in the pawnbroker's office, and at the moment when he had matured his plans for a journey into the country where his arrest would be almost impossible.

'Strangely enough,' Gwennie concluded, 'he might have escaped but for the fate that overtook him.'

'What fate?'

'In some cunning way he managed to escape the vigilance of the police, followed you and

Mr Buckmaster, struck your friend down at the entrance to the tunnel, and might possibly have got off with the diamonds had he not been killed by a passing train.'

'Killed!'

'Yes; and you narrowly escaped the same fate. Mr Buckmaster was only for a moment stunned by Wildreck's blow, and fortunately was able to go to your aid.'

For a while I was silent, lost in thought over all the strange events that had been crowded into the last few weeks of my life. At last I said, 'But the diamonds? Where are they?'

Gwennie raised her finger warningly. The night had closed in; the curtains had been drawn and the shutters closed in my inner room. The crystal lamp stood at hand, and the girl now took it up.

'Come this way, John,' said she; 'I want your help.'

'What is it?' said I, rising and gazing intently into her face.

'Look into the dark receptacle once more,' she said; 'you will find an answer there.'

I hastened to obey, while Gwennie, as she had done before, held the lamp; and there, in that secret recess, was the brick-coloured box, with the lid wide open, exhibiting to my gratified eyes the dead man's diamonds—at last.

A year went quickly away. I made a voyage to the Brazils, where, owing to some fortunate mining operations, I found myself possessed of considerable wealth. Upon my return to England at the year's end Gwennie became my wife. Our home, known as Pepworth Hall, lies among the Derbyshire hills; and it is here, in my quiet study, that I have just penned this leading episode in my life.

## BALLADE: ON HIS LADY SPEAKING OR SINGING.

THERE is a music that doth trance the ear  
And in the porches of the body clings,  
Whereby the prisoned soul through sense may  
hear

Some cadence caught from heavenly chorusing:  
My soul needs no such ministers; she flings  
Her cumbrous robes aside, and all unfurled  
Leaps up to listen when one speaks or sings  
Who owns the sweetest voice in all the world.

Music can make the spirit's vision clear,  
And train her through sonorous imagings  
To light upon some antenatal sphere  
Or brood on callow Time with prescient wings.  
My spirit out of space and time upsprings,  
And, hovering at God's open gates empearled,  
Listens and learns unutterable things,  
Hearing the sweetest voice in all the world.

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Music to men is Death's dim pioneer,  
And many a mystic ambassage it brings  
Of dubious hope or sadness, joy or fear,  
From that high choir where Cicely's censor  
swings.

My music knows no vague interpretations,  
No hinted bliss, nor cloudy menace hurled;  
Only the clear refrain, 'I love you,' rings  
Under the sweetest voice in all the world.

### L'ENVOI.

Lady, around thy brows the King of kings  
His earthly coronal of song hath curled  
To have thee sing in Heaven, whose thousand  
strings  
Wait for the sweetest voice in all the world.

T. H. PASSMORE.



# A JUNGLE COURTSHIP.

By E. D. CUMING.

## I.



HE elder brother has never yet told how it comes that he has returned to the village,' said Mah Khet.

'He will tell if the little sister wishes to hear,' replied Mounng Ban after a moment's hesitation.

'She does not wish to know if he does not wish to tell,' said Mah Khet.

They were not brother and sister, these two; they merely used that accommodating form of address, which is always polite, and may be affectionate. He was only a policeman, and a policeman in disgrace at that; she was the daughter of Ko Thaw, the rich timber-merchant and head-man of Panaday village. Mounng Ban admired Mah Khet, and for that reason we find him squatting under her father's house paying his addresses through a hole in the floor.

In the more westerly and northern parts of Burma they manage these things better. In Rangoon or Mandalay, for instance, when you want to pay a visit to 'her' you go to her parents' house with some obliging friend at 'young man's time,' which is just after dark. The friend sits at one end of the veranda, while you and the lady occupy the other; and papa and mamma keep scrupulously out of sight and hearing. This arrangement has obvious advantages. In Tenasserim, the province in which Panaday is situated, immemorial usage prescribes a different method of courting. There, as elsewhere, the houses are built on piles, the floor being six feet or more clear of the ground; and in every house, if you look in the corners, you will find a hole about six inches square in the floor. It is an extraordinary thing that you never meet a woman who knows what that hole was originally made for; some even live in a house for years and have never even noticed it till you point it out! Yet, if at 'young man's time' you step quietly underneath the house and cough, you will hear light footsteps overhead, and that hole will be darkened by the face of the daughter of the house, who will say, 'The elder brother is already come,' or something of that sort. This kind of keyhole courtship no doubt has advantages, but young men accustomed to the other method say it is liable to cause crick in the neck.

Mounng Ban, however, did not know that any other way of paying such a visit existed. He squatted blissfully on the ground in the dark,

his back against a post, and his eyes fixed on the spot where he knew the hole framed Mah Khet's face. He had been there nearly an hour, and had not got crick in the neck yet. Practice is everything.

'I will tell,' he said; 'but I thought everybody knew.' Then he became aware by her movements that Mah Khet was making herself comfortable to listen.

'Well, then, the black foreign policemen, having caught the dacoit chief Nga Galay, with four of his men, brought them bound with ropes to the station at Mopoon, saying to us of the guard, "Keep these men safe till such time as His Honour the Superintendent shall order." This was at the hour when the evening star rises; and we, mindful of the great magic of Nga Galay, locked him and his men, bound, in the cage. In the second watch of the night came His Honour Ton Sen Thekin, the Superintendent. He gave praise to the black foreign police; but to us he spoke hard words, because it had seemed good to us to leave the dacoits tightly bound. He said to us, "Loose the ropes; their skin is cut." The sergeant made answer, "Lord, the powers of this dacoit are great; with the finger he breaks iron bars, and his strength is as the strength of nine elephants." To this Ton Sen Thekin replied that the sergeant's mouth was full of fool's words; and he stood while we loosed the arms of the prisoners and locked them again in the cage. In the morning when we awakened the dacoits were gone, two strong iron bars having been broken from the mortar. Thus were the sergeant's words made good. Yet upon this account he was dismissed, and those of us who had red stripes on the sleeve for merit lost them, and were sent to jungle villages.'

'Is the elder brother sorry?' asked Mah Khet after a pause.

'No.'

'Does he not wish to return to Mopoon, near the city?'

'No.'

'Why not?'

'The little sister knows.'

The little sister conjectured that Mounng Ban was glad to be sent back to Panaday, because that was his native village; and when she was furnished with the true reason, naturally refused to believe it. She added that her father was very sorry that Mounng Ban had incurred the displeasure of the Government; her father thought so much about official rank, and was

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afraid that in Panaday Mounng Ban would have no chance to recover his good-conduct stripes.

'Does he think ill of me?' inquired Mounng Ban anxiously. Under ordinary circumstances a policeman does not trouble himself about the opinion of his neighbours entertain of him; but Ko Thaw was no common village chief; the Deputy Commissioner himself, when he visited Panaday, had told the people that their head-man was much respected by the Government. It was on Ko Thaw's good word that Mounng Ban had been first enlisted in the police; his good word might recover those stripes that had been taken off his uniform coat, and—he was Mah Khet's father. By the convenient fiction of Burmese social life, Mah Khet's father and mother did not know that Mounng Ban came to see her at 'young man's time'—in fact, didn't know any one came, and would be immensely but politely surprised when he asked leave to become their son-in-law.

'He does not think ill of you,' said Mah Khet; 'but he would be very glad and happy, I think, if you regained the goodwill of the Government.'

'Even now it is rumoured that Nga Galay and his band are in this district,' remarked Mounng Ban. 'There are a thousand rupees upon his head. If I could but shoot the dog's son!'

'Go and catch him,' said Mah Khet lightly.

Mounng Ban laughed. But as he rose and stretched himself he sighed, for he knew well that honour and promotion would be the portion of him who did arrest the famous robber; and honour and promotion meant Ko Thaw's consent to his marriage with Mah Khet. Mounng Ban had not sent to ask the old gentleman's permission yet, and did not intend to, because he knew Ko Thaw would say, 'I think they had better wait a little while. I fear Mounng Ban's health is not very good;' and such an answer is hurtful to the dignity of a police officer.

Mah Khet having remarked that it was time to sleep, Mounng Ban wished her good rest, and strolled away up the raised middle of the street to the *thannah*, whose wooden roof stood out clear-cut against the night sky.

They go to bed early in jungle villages, and there was nobody about; but as Mounng Ban passed along the murmur of voices drew his eyes to a house under which a pair of sturdy legs was just discernible in the gloom. Knowing well that the legs belonged to somebody on the same errand that had occupied his own evening, Mounng Ban was about to go on, when memory of the Lord Superintendent's wiggling roused his sense of routine. 'Hoo-go-dah?' he demanded, coming to a halt. The proprietor of the legs answered 'Bachelor' in a diffident tone, and a smothered giggle greeted Mounng Ban's parrot response to 'Pass, bachelor, an'-all-well.' The giggle annoyed Mounng Ban, uncertain whether the English words, whose meaning he knew, were quite applicable to the case; and being annoyed,

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he made a point of challenging the owner of every pair of legs he saw—six in number—on his way along the street.

'You challenge often to-night,' remarked one of his comrades sleepily as he came up the steps of the police *thannah*, on whose floor the men had spread their mats.

'There is rumour that Nga Galay's gang is in this district,' replied Mounng Ban; 'therefore, when I saw legs I challenged.'

The comrade chuckled, remarking that one knew where most young men's legs might be seen at this hour.

'The legs of a thief are not more white nor more brown than the legs of an honest man,' said Mounng Ban, a little sulkily, as he took off his belt and unrolled his sleeping-mat.

'You speak well,' struck in the voice of Pho Gye, the head-constable. 'Your words are the words of a wise man. It is well to challenge all, for a thief may lurk in the guise of a lover, the house-owner thinking no evil.'

'Not much fear of that in Panaday,' said the first speaker, yawning.

'Nevertheless, let all persons whose faces are not seen be challenged henceforth after dark,' said the head-constable; and Mounng Ban lay down to sleep feeling that he had already taken one step towards Mah Khet.

The policemen made a little fun at their senior's expense next morning, asking if he would not issue an order that young men who went courting should whiten their legs with chalk so that all might know what they were doing; but before the sun was high the scoffers were silenced, and their tone towards the head-constable and Mounng Ban became very respectful. The change was brought about by the arrival of a messenger on a swift elephant. He came from the Assistant Superintendent of Police at Shway-geen, who wrote that information had been received proving Nga Galay and his gang were in the neighbourhood of Panaday. Parties were being sent out to scour the jungles, and meanwhile the police at Panaday must keep a careful lookout for suspicious characters, and never for an hour leave the *thannah*, with the rifles it contained, unguarded. Nga Galay had no firearms, and it was known that he was making every effort to obtain them.

Pho Gye read this letter aloud to his men and to the village people whom the arrival of the elephant had drawn to the *thannah*. When he finished and looked over his spectacles at Mounng Ban to say gravely, 'You did well last night, brother,' nobody even smiled.

'With leave,' said Mounng Ban, feeling the necessity to maintain his rebudding reputation for zeal, 'I would say that it were well to send our rifles and cartridges in to Shway-geen upon the elephant; otherwise the dacoits may steal them.'

Most of his hearers murmured approval; but

the head-constable, digging his thumb-nail into the floor uneasily, demurred. He quite agreed that Mounge Ban's thought was wise; the Government were afraid lest Nga Galay should steal rifles, and any child could see that the weapons would be safer in the barrack at headquarters than they were in the rack just behind them. At the same time, he feared that his honour would send back the rifles, asking, 'Can the Panaday police kill dacoits like mosquitoes with slaps of the hand?'

'That is very true,' murmured the people, and their tone was that of sages heralding a new and curious discovery; 'that is certainly true.'

'I shall go and take the advice of Ko Thaw,' said the head-constable.

'Here comes Ko Thaw!' exclaimed Mounge Ban. 'He comes to the *thannah*, and carries a paper.'

Ko Thaw had also received a letter by the elephant-messenger. It came from the clerk to the Assistant Superintendent, and was heard with profound attention as Ko Thaw read it aloud, squatting at the top of the *thannah* stairs.

'Advise you to send in any money you have by the elephant!' exclaimed the head-constable. 'Surely the dacoits must be very close at hand.'

'They may be,' said Ko Thaw, folding the letter. 'I have four thousand rupees in the new iron box, but I shan't send them in.'

'The new iron box!' murmured the people admiringly. 'Where could money be safer than in the new iron box?'

It had been the pride of the village since it arrived from Moulmein six months ago, and was landed from the boat slung to a beam on the shoulders of about four times the number of men required. No stranger of consideration was suffered to leave Panaday without being shown the marvels of the box in Ko Thaw's sleeping-room. Visitors, having tapped the beam which shored up the floor under it, and invoked their mothers over the prolonged ceremony of stud-turning and pressing which pre-saged opening the safe, were, if they appeared insufficiently impressed, invited to lift it. Once a muscular sceptic did tilt up one side of it; that a crushed great toe and a month's lameness was the penalty only enhanced the virtues of the iron box, being accounted a judgment upon the impious.

'Any neighbour fearing lest dacoits come should bring his rupees to be locked in the box,' said Ko Thaw; 'but for my part I do not think they will attack this village.'

'I wish we could put the rifles in it,' sighed Mounge Ban; 'but they are a man's length, and the box is only two spans of the hand each way.'

Ko Thaw was entirely of the head-constable's opinion that the Superintendent would be angry if they sent the rifles in to headquarters for safety; so when the elephant-men started home-

wards in the early afternoon they went empty-handed.

Though the people went about their usual vocations that day, the news wrought a feeling of unrest, more by the manner of its coming than by its substance. Warning to keep watch for suspicious characters had often been received before, but by boat-messengers, who took a day and a half to come by the winding creeks from Shway-geen. The authorities would not have sent warning by *koonkie* or fast elephant, which came by the hill paths through jungle in six hours, if the matter had not been thought urgent; and before the shadows began to lengthen, Ko Thaw's box was stuffed full of bags of rupees and gold ornaments.

'Nine thousand two hundred and two rupees,' announced the head-man after crushing in the last bag and locking the safe. 'If the dacoits come we shall leave a message to say, "If you can carry this away you may keep it."'

The assembled neighbours echoed, 'Yes, certainly they may keep it;' but Mah That, a blear-eyed old woman who had the knack of saying the right thing at the wrong time, cried, 'Suppose Nga Galay's men come quietly in the night and compel the head-man to open the box with the key?'

Ko Thaw's face lengthened visibly; that very possible contingency unfortunately had not occurred to him.

'If you had thought of that in time, mother,' he said, 'I would have sent the key in to Shway-geen by the elephant.'

'It is a pity,' said everybody; and they relieved their feelings by scowling at Mah That, who had not a *piece* in the safe—or out of it, for that matter.

Those neighbours for whose money it had been impossible to find space in the box said there was always a weak point about a new-fangled notion like that, and occupied the waning daylight in digging holes to bury their property; and by sunset all were prepared for the dacoits—that is to say, had made up packets of cooked rice in leaves to take with them when the first alarm bade them go and hide in the jungle.

The night passed quietly. Two or three times the village was startled for a moment by the challenge of the policeman on patrol, stern to ferocity because he knew whom he was challenging; but when the sun rose, the men and women who sauntered to the bank of the creek to sit and gossip in the shade of the great bamboo clump had so far recovered themselves that when the head-constable appeared carrying his blue coat over his shoulder they could greet him with laughing cries of 'Hoo-go-dah?'

'A policeman who wants a chew of betel,' replied Pho Gye pleasantly. 'Has any one passed down this morning?' he asked, helping himself from one of the betel-boxes offered.

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'One little boatload of grain,' answered a young man, yawning; 'it was going to Shway-geen, and gave no news.'

'I don't believe there's any news to give,' drawled another.

'The letter said the dacoits were reported to be somewhere up the river,' remarked Pho Gyee.

'Well, if a boat comes down the river, and the men say there's no news, one may say the letter was wrong.'

'There is not a village within a day's journey worth attacking,' said Ko Thaw; 'so, if Nga Galay were near, he would have attacked us. I do not believe he is near. Who is going in for a swim?'

The men were still splashing and laughing in the shallows when some one called from the bank that another boat was coming down, and all turned to look.

'It is a pot-seller's boat,' said the head-constable, who had not bathed. 'It rides high on the water, and I can see the red earthenware.'

The rowers were pulling lazily, and, from the frequency with which they looked round towards Panaday, were evidently anxious to make an end of rowing and take rest.

'Whence do you come, neighbours?' cried two or three as the boat came near and the men rested on their oars. 'From Waydaw village? Well, that is far. Come and eat rice with us, and give news. Have you any word of Nga Galay?'

'Nga Galay?' echoed the steersman, releasing his grasp of the steering-paddle as the boat grounded. 'Nga Galay? Ah! the dacoit chief, you mean. No, neighbours, we have heard nothing of him.'

'We have news from Shway-geen that he is somewhere about here,' said Pho Gyee, 'and therefore asked for news.'

The steersman looked rather grave, and said he was sure that if his master had known that, they would not have travelled by night.

'Is the good owner of the boat not with you?' asked Ko Thaw.

'He sleeps,' replied the steersman. 'Having had much fever lately, he is weary, and is now asleep.'

The village men showed the new-comers where they could tie their boat, and repeated their invitation to come ashore and eat; it was quite time for morning rice, and when they had eaten and rested they could go on in the cool of the evening.

'After what you tell us,' said the steersman, wading through the shallow to the bank, 'I doubt whether Mounng Doon, the boat-owner, will wish to go on to Shway-geen. The creeks below this village being very narrow, the dacoits may attack us as we pass down.'

'There is rice and sleeping-room for friends in my village,' said Ko Thaw politely.

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'Also policemen to protect,' said the steersman, making a little obeisance to Pho Gyee, who had put on his coat to show his status. 'I think, however, that if we can buy here a few viss of salt we shall start back to Waydaw this afternoon.'

At this one of the rowers remarked pleasantly that his friend seemed to forget that Mounng Doon had taken a rupee each from five men to carry them to Shway-geen; those men might object to be taken back to the place they came from.

'Well, well, we shall hear the good boat-owner's words when he wakes,' said the steersman. 'Meantime I am hungry, and these friends of Panaday offer rice.'

The rowers and passengers were taken to the houses of different hosts; the steersman, whose name was Shway San, being the guest of Ko Thaw. He was a very polite young man, and the deference he showed quite won the heart of the head-man. The box, to which he was introduced after eating, interested him so much that it had to be unlocked and relocked half-a-dozen times. To Mah Khet and her mother he was so complimentary that the elder lady said shyly to her daughter afterwards that it was well Somebody Else had not been by to hear the pretty things Shway San said.

Somebody Else, having been on duty all night, had spent the morning in sleep; and as the sun was high when he awoke, and folks had lain down for the midday rest, he saw nothing of the visitors till the afternoon was advanced. They had bought the salt they wanted, but their departure was delayed owing to differences of opinion. Some of the men were afraid to go on because of dacoits, and others were afraid to go back for the same reason. Mounng Ban happened to come upon the party as they squatted on the bank discussing the matter, and was politely asked for his advice.

'Why not stay here?' said Mounng Ban. 'Wait until we receive certain news of the dacoits; then if they are reported up the river you can go down; if down, you can return.'

'I think the Government officer gives very sound advice,' said the steersman. 'We are safe here in a large village with twelve armed police'—

'No; six policemen only,' corrected Mounng Ban.

'Well, six policemen, who no doubt have very good swords'—

'Each has a rifle,' put in Mounng Ban.

'That is good—very good; six Government officers with rifles. Can we do better than stay?'

The others agreed that they could not do better; two of the advocates for moving on, indeed, said that had they known the police were so well armed they should never have suggested leaving.

'They are certainly some of the politest men I ever met,' said Mounng Ban that evening through the floor-hole to Mah Khet. 'The old mother Mah That received from them two large new earthen jars without payment.'

'Shway San wished to give me a silk neckerchief,' said Mah Khet, with a little simper.

'Oh!' Mounng Ban's tone was not one of gratification.

'Yes; but when he said, "I must give it through the hole," I bade him be silent. What would the elder brother do if he, passing by, saw another in the place where he now sits?'

'Pass by?' said Mounng Ban dryly.

'Who is that passing so slowly just now?' inquired Mah Khet, who could not see into the street for the mats which covered the veranda railing. She only spoke in mischief, wishing to make him jealous; but Mounng Ban turned his head to look, and by the bright moonlight he recognised—Nga Galay.

## II.



HE pottery-merchant and his friends were gathered in conclave under the mat tunnel which covered in the after-part of their boat. The silence of the moonlit night was broken by the baying of pariah dogs in the village, but only a light in the distant police *thannah* hinted where men might be awake. Nevertheless, those in the boat talked in low tones lest any should hear them.

'We cannot rush the *thannah*,' said Nga Galay, otherwise Mounng Doon, boat-owner and seller of pots. 'I have seen; there is open ground about the place, and you heard the words of the old fool in spectacles.'

'The rifles are always kept loaded lest his lordship and followers should come,' chuckled Shway San. 'His lordship speaks well; we cannot rush the place.'

'We might creep up softly and take the guns while the policemen sleep,' said a voice respectfully—'if his lordship approved.'

'His lordship does not approve,' snapped Nga Galay, whose temper was a little ruffled from confinement to the boat. Knowing that description of his person had been circulated, and a large reward offered for his head, whether upon his shoulders or off, he felt pardonable diffidence about showing himself in daylight. Partly from bravado, and partly from sheer restlessness, he had walked through the village after nightfall, and returned to his boat happily unconscious that he had been seen by the only man in the place who could recognise him without the aid of the word-picture the police authorities had drawn with such irritating exactitude. Years ago when he got into trouble they had forced

him to stand up stripped while clerks wrote in a great book every tattoo-mark and mole on his body from neck to heel; Nga Galay had neither forgotten nor forgiven it.

'We cannot get the rifles,' said the chief after thought; 'and if we try to take the key of his box from the head-man the police will shoot us. The box is too heavy to carry, even if there were none to fight; and'—to Shway San—'from what you say, it cannot be broken open.'

'Its strength is beyond the magic of the most illustrious of leaders,' sighed Shway San, 'being of iron thick as a man's thigh, in the manner of those English money-boxes.'

Shway San exaggerated, and he knew it; but discretion recommends overstatement when you rate a thing superior to the magical powers of your chief.

'I know the kind of box,' said Nga Galay; 'I have seen one.' He might have added, 'in the jail at Moulmein,' but did not.

He relapsed into thought once more, and the men sat silent, listening to the whisper of the wavelets as the boat swung to the current.

'There is but one way of obtaining this money,' said Nga Galay at last. 'We must seize the head-man's wife and hold her for ransom.'

'Most luminous wisdom!' said all the men in a breath.

'With his lordship's gracious leave,' said Shway San, 'his lordship has not seen the woman, wife of the head-man. To the eye of his servant she is not comely; she is elderly, very fat, and, by the testimony of her neighbours, a scold.'

'What is that in the jungle, where a kerchief and a stone will muzzle a scold?' asked the chief.

'His lordship's mouth is full of light and his way with scolds is short; but will any husband pay to recover a scold?'

'Ah! A sword of honour shall certainly be given into your hand,' said Nga Galay, with approval. 'Speak on.'

'I would say, with leave, that which his lordship would command did his knowledge of these jungle-village cattle approach the sum of his wisdom. This head-man has a daughter, a maid of great beauty, spare of figure, fair of skin, and having a voice like—like—like'—He paused as if at a loss for words. Shway San would have made his fortune anywhere as a courtier.

'The order, therefore,' said Nga Galay with decision, 'is that this girl be taken and held for ransom. How much is said to be in the box? Nine thousand rupees? Very good; that is the price of the wench. To my astute follower, Shway San, I entrust the honour of taking the girl without hurt and without disturbance.'

Shway San expressed his gratitude for this

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signal mark of confidence, and undertaking to place his leader in possession of Mah Khet before noon next day, sought his sleeping-mat to consider how he might fulfil the engagement.

If he had any doubts next morning, they were masked behind an air of diplomatic reserve. To the inquiries of his friends he made answer, 'Let the oars hang free; let one man sit in the bow cutting sticks for the pot; and when I beat the hands together, let him sever the rope that holds us to the bank, while the rest seize the oars and row very fast away. Now silence; you are peaceful traders still, divided whether we go up the river or down.'

For one to whom the capture of prisoners by stratagem was a novelty, Shway San certainly made a very creditable beginning. Many of the villagers being assembled as usual on the bank, he stood up and announced loudly that his master had ordered him to sell without reserve all this large and excellent stock of earthenware by auction, and he invited their good friends of Panaday to inspect the pots before they were put up for sale. One young man, shouting, 'I will buy some at a price,' waded to the boat's side and began to climb on board; but Shway San skilfully repelled him, saying it was unseemly that so fine a young woman should don her brother's clothes; let her go and put on her own skirt, and then he should be happy to see her. Whereupon the youth retired, laughing shamefacedly under the chaff of his friends; it is the woman's business to buy such things for the household.

'Only women are allowed to come and see the pots!' inquired Moung Deon pleasantly.

'Women only, there being little space in the boat,' replied Shway San; 'and we particularly invite the young and pretty ones.'

Every one laughed at this, and the boat having been poled in and planks laid from the shore, the women, with much giggling and screaming, balanced themselves on their way on board. By breakfast-time nearly every woman in the village had examined the pots, and had marked those she meant to bid for; the man who sat cutting firewood in the bow had chopped every stick into matchwood, but Shway San had given him no signal to cut the rope. Mah Khet had not even appeared on the bank; and after he had sold a dozen jars, Shway San declared that much talking had made him hungry, and as the sun was now hot, the rest of the stock would be sold in the evening.

'Selling jars at half their value is a poor morning's work,' grumbled the chief when the villagers, in high good humour, had drifted away to eat their rice, accompanied by some of the visitors.

'His lordship forgets the trash cost us nothing to begin with,' grinned Shway San.

'My follower forgets that the son of a dog from whom I took the boat will have informed  
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the police. Even now they may be after us,' retorted Nga Galay. 'We cannot dally here another day; it is not safe.'

'Your slave had hoped to lure the wench into his lordship's hands by this means,' said Shway San, rather crestfallen.

'I did not want a whole cargo of women prisoners,' said the chief.

'It was his slave's purpose,' said Shway San mildly, 'to at once throw overboard those his lordship did not want, that they might carry to the village the message, "Bring nine thousand rupees to the great tree two miles down the river at sunrise to-morrow, and receive the girl in exchange."'

'Well, having failed to decoy the woman by this plan, better try another,' replied the chief sharply.

Shway San thought over the problem while he ate his rice, and fell asleep afterwards considering it. When he awakened the shadows were already long, and a few old women were gathered on the bank waiting for him to continue the auction; new pots at half the bazaar price are not to be had every day.

'Ho, younger brother!' they shrilled as he rose and twisted up his hair, 'we wait. Sell and take our money.'

'I knew you would come,' cried Shway San, striking an attitude; 'trust the woman to know good earthenware when she sees it. Now, here—here is a jar so well made that it holds twice as much as any other jar the same size, and so sound that if you knocked the bottom out the water would remain in. Who says ten rupees for this pot? Well, ten amuas?'

Very small jokes go a long way in a quiet jungle place; before three jars had changed hands the whole village had collected on the bank, and Shway San's heart beat as he saw Mah Khet and her mother escorted by the young constable who had asked in the morning if only women were allowed on board the boat. Pretending to think the bidding was slow, he stopped selling, and said that he was sure he saw before him some friends who had not inspected his goods. They must come and see them.

Seven or eight women, Mah Khet among them, rose and picked their way through the crowd to the water's edge. Shway San saw her come, and had to hide his delight by burlesquing the clown in the play when the princess smiles upon him; but just as Mah Khet was about to set foot on the plank, he saw a young policeman whisper to the girl's mother, who called her to come back. Shway San could have killed the meddlesome fellow, whom he thought was jealous. He did not see what Moung Ban, keenly watchful since his discovery of last night, had seen—namely, a man with a knife in his hand creep along to the prow of the boat and squat by the rope which fastened it. Others



saw the act, but not knowing what Mounng Ban knew, thought nothing of it.

Shway San got through his play-auction somehow, tossing the pots overside to the buyers, and forgetting to ask for the money as often as not, while the people laughed and inquired if he had nothing more to sell in the same way. After the last jar had been thrown over, an old woman shouted, 'Finished, brother! Now you have time to put on your best clothes for "young man's time;" she will be happy, the girl you court.' He had sold the old woman two pots for nothing, so she thought much of him. Shway San laughed to her, and went in to see the chief, for her words had given him a new plan.

'There is risk,' said Nga Galay when he had heard the scheme; 'but it is my pleasure to order that the men do as you say, save this: I myself will go beneath the house and speak in your name, while you, at my call, shall rush in and drag the girl to the boat.'

'With leave,' said Shway San, 'the girl knows my voice, and is, perhaps'—he sniggered respectfully—'well disposed towards your lordship's servant.'—'Better be outside the house than in, lest the police interfere,' thought Shway San.

'It is my pleasure to play the part of the lover,' said the chief, equally alive to its advantages.

Shway San gave way as a matter of course, and they proceeded to develop their plan. First of all the boat must be moored nearer Ko Thaw's house, which stood on the bank, with its back to the river. 'But that,' said the chief, 'must be done without arousing suspicion.'

'That is easy,' said his lieutenant. Stepping to the prow, he loosed the rope, immediately crying out to his companions that they had broken adrift. The men seized their oars at once; but Shway San could not find a suitable place to drop the anchor he had made ready till the boat lay just off the head-man's house, where the bank overhung the water, which had burrowed under, and ran deep.

'Better done in daylight than after the sky shuts,' he remarked as he rejoined the chief. 'We lie so close that the side nearly rubs against the bank.'

Nga Galay said Shway San should have a golden sword of honour, and resumed his instructions. Soon after dark he would step ashore under the house in whose shadow they lay, and having attracted Mah Khet's attention, would beg her to accept the silk kerchief Shway San had offered. When she put her hand through the hole to take the present Nga Galay would hold it and keep her prisoner until Shway San and three others, who must be in waiting at the bottom of the stairs, should rush up—

'Speak lower, your lordship! Remember we lie almost under the window of the sleeping-room.'

'Should rush up,' continued the chief, dropping his voice to a whisper, 'and carry her off to the boat, cut the anchor-rope, and row away.'

'I only hope there were none to hear my lord's words,' said Shway San, peering uneasily round the mat tunnel. 'One might flick a betel-nut into the open window there.'

'It is a pity you moved the boat at this time. Such haste was not needed,' replied Nga Galay.

'I have drawn scarce ten breaths since my lord declared the deed worthy of reward,' said Shway San sulkily.

A slight movement in the house close by checked any answer the chief might have had on his lips, and for a few minutes the two sat listening intently.

'It was only a dog,' said Shway San at last; 'the people sit gossiping in the street at this hour.'

He sprang on to the bank, and passing between the houses, disappeared. Nga Galay watched him go, and calling for writing materials, sat up to write the message which must be left in Ko Thaw's house, telling him where he should send the ransom.

'The success of an enterprise like this,' said his lordship graciously to the man who crouched before him holding the ink, 'depends on the care bestowed upon small details of arrangement. Give me yet another strip of palm-leaf whereon I may write the shares each shall receive of this nine thousand rupees.'

In a few minutes Shway San returned, looking radiant; he had walked up the village, and looking into the *thannah*, had seen not one policeman there. The rifles and bayonets were also missing from the rack; and on asking whither the constables had gone, a woman had told him there was news of Nga Galay's gang.

'Then without doubt they are now far off in the jungle,' said the chief, looking pleased, as well he might.

The sun had set now, and night was fast closing in. Nga Galay turned out his rush-work box and changed his clothes, putting on his best silk *pasoh*, clean white jacket, and new silk head-kerchief. It was unlikely that any one would see him; but custom ordains that he who goes courting shall wear his best clothes, and the moon would give just enough light for Mah Khet to see that he was properly attired. Being dressed, he lit a cheroot and sat down to wait. Shway San and his party were ready, but they had merely to gird their *pasohs* tightly about the thighs.

All was prepared; the oars hung loose from the thwarts, and the rowers squatted by them in readiness to pull; in the bow, for the third time, crouched the man, knife in hand, ready to cut the anchor-rope. The chief threw his eye over the crew, signed to Shway San to take his men ashore, and followed them himself. The village was quiet save for the low murmur of

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voices. Nga Galay, as he stood under the hole which had been pointed out to him, glanced out over the street and saw the young men pass to vanish under one house and another. One coming by saw Nga Galay and threw him a laughing challenge; his answer was followed by movements on the floor above, and in another moment a sweet voice whispered through the floor-hole:

'Is the elder brother come?'

'The man of the boat from Waydaw, a humble seller of pots, who would ask acceptance of a trifling gift,' replied the chief.

'It is unseemly that I take gifts from strangers,' said Mah Khet.

'Only a silk neckerchief—a little pink kerchief of English silk?'

'It is tempting,' said Mah Khet; 'yet—yet'—

Nga Galay held up the kerchief that she might feel its texture if she would. He was a tall man, and his head nearly touched the joists of the floor; holding the silk with his left hand, he raised his right in readiness.

'I may hardly take it from a stranger, however courteous,' said Mah Khet; 'but perhaps if I found it in the morning on the stairs'—

'Might not another find it there?'

'That is true; that is quite true. Well, it may be passed through the hole, though I can't tell what my mother would say.'

Nga Galay saw it was useless to try and persuade her to reach down for the kerchief; he shook it open to cover his hand, and marking where her fingers clasped the edge of the hole, caught her wrist. She screamed, and so did Nga Galay, for other hands seized his and he was swung off his legs. Vaguely he heard the patter of naked feet up the stairs, while some one flew past him, and creaking told that the some one had jumped into the boat. He had no mind for this or the scuffle within; rough coir rope was wreathing about his arm, and he felt the loops close and pinch the skin ere he was drawn to the shoulder against the hole. There he hung, feeling for earth with his toes, while lights danced and the policemen he had thought so far away ran down the stairs to close round him with clinking handcuffs and more ropes.

'Show his face!' cried one; and Nga Galay blinked as the light streamed through the dingy sheets of cobweb.

They saw his face, and one constable, bawling his name, let out a roar of joy that brought the villagers running.

'Oho! oho! the trap for a jungle-cat catches the tiger himself! Come, see the tiger caught

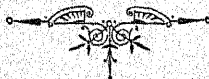
in his own snare! See this dog's son who sought to carry off a maid for ransom!'

Nga Galay cursed them with all the curses he knew; but the worse his words the louder their jeers. The policemen put down their rifles to dance and sing with delight, while Nga Galay in their midst hung clawing at the ground like a fowl. They kept him writhing and kicking till every mother in Panaday had brought her child to see the chief whose head was worth a thousand rupees—a thousand rupees—a thousand rupees in silver! They sat round in eager debate whether it were wiser to shoot him there or take him chained to Shway-geen. They asked would he give nine thousand rupees to be let go, and where he thought his friends might be found to pay it. Only three of his friends lay bound upstairs, and the *thannah* cage, they said, had room for all. Before Nga Galay, his ankles linked with two pairs of handcuffs, and a rope knotted about his neck, sat on the ground glowering over his swelled arm, he had learned how Constable Moung Ban, formerly of Mopoon, had recognised him the night before; how the movements of his men had been watched; how, when the boat was moved, the police had assembled in Ko Thaw's house, and that same Moung Ban had listened while the plan to carry off Mah Khet was discussed; and how, not having heard all, the police had thought the arm they seized was Shway San's. But Shway San, a cautious wight, was now far away and safe, having sent his men upstairs to cover his own retreat.

There is little more to tell. When Nga Galay had been taken to Shway-geen, tried, and sentenced to transportation overseas, the Lord Superintendent commanded that Moung Ban come to his house, and there, before all the policemen and several English gentlemen, gave him three new red stripes to be sewn upon his sleeve, and conferred upon him the rank of sergeant. Then, being asked if he would like to return to Panaday, Moung Ban said, 'With your noble lordship's leave, yes,' and was bidden go back and take the place of old Pho Gyee, also promoted, and transferred to a new station.

Moung Ban, on his return, sent a friend (having neither father nor mother) to Ko Thaw with these words, 'I would marry my father's daughter; whereupon Ko Thaw sent answer, 'Let the young man, our son, the husband of our daughter, come and dwell in this house.'

And to this day his little sons, taught by their mother, point to the hole in the floor, saying, 'Through this our father drew promotion and honour, having sought love.'



# HOW KELLY CAME TO BILLABONG.

BY CARLTON DAWE.



AT Billabong it had been a hot and very busy day; but every one perspired and was happy, for prices had ruled high. Billabong held a market of more or less importance every week; but at this momentous period of its existence the annual live-stock sale was in progress, when the gentry and others of the surrounding districts flocked into the little bush-township. Upon such occasions Billabong did itself well, and the one long, wide, straggling street invariably presented a singularly animated appearance. Ladies from adjacent stations, spruce young bushmen in the nattiest of riding-breeches, comfortable squatters from the 'far back,' drovers, herdsmen, townspeople—all jostled each other good-naturedly in Main Street. The annual cattle sale was a red-letter day in the annals of the district.

Money was plentiful, and was freely expended. The bushman loves a spree. In the dreary fastnesses of the back-country he leads a life which, were it not for the eager anticipation of the annual outburst, would be perfectly unendurable. As a consequence, restraint comes not into the reckoning, and he who has starved for a year begins the carouse with champagne. True, this quickly deteriorates into vile whisky and viler beer, and then to utter bankruptcy; but the bushman sheds no tear over spilt milk. He has eaten his cake, and it is well. Back he goes to the bush, and for the next twelve months works like a bullock in anticipation of another such bout.

By noon the principal lots had all been disposed of, for people began work early at Billabong so as to avoid the heat of the day; and between two and three o'clock Sergeant Wiggan and Constable Blayney, in the cool recesses of the police-station, sat down in their shirt-sleeves before a steaming boiled leg of mutton. The sergeant's wife, a pleasant-faced body in a white apron, attended to their wants; and while Trooper Blayney ate and mopped, she manipulated the beer-jug with no niggard hand.

'It's a terrible dry-thirst I have on me, Mrs Wiggan,' said the trooper. 'What wid the dust, an' the bellowin', an' the shoutin', I'm like a bit of the rale Saharey.'

'A trying day, Mr Blayney!'

'Tryin' isn't the word for't, ma'am; it's downright crool to animals. 'Tain't the likes uv me to be cursin' at me duty; but to stand all

day in the broilin' sun, wid never a pint to wash down the amazin' congregations uv dust, is enough to make a dacent man quit the foorce. Upon me sowl, I'd rather tackle the Kellys single-handed than go through such another awful day.'

'Um,' muttered the sergeant, a grim, thick-set man with an ugly scowl and a reputation for daring which made him the terror of evil-deers, 'that would be a nice mouthful—wouldn't it?' His equanimity had often been disturbed by the loquacity of his junior, whom he found a sore trial; but, being unable to do anything with the Irishman, he simply called him Irish—and that meant much.

'Och! it's not me that's belavin' all I hear about thim bushrangers,' said the trooper. 'I'm thinkin' it's as well for thim they're kapin' on the Victoree side uv the river. In New South Wales it would be a short rope for the blackguards.'

'What makes you think that?' asked the sergeant.

'Why, because over in Victoree they're a pack of fools. Think uv it. These varmin'ts have been at large nigh on two years, and divil a dacent hand has yet been laid on their shoulder. Are ye tellin' me, sergeant, that we don't do things better than that in New South Wales?'

'There are difficulties, my friend,' replied the sergeant, 'and these bushrangers are the cleverest of all their breed. How would you get 'em out of the mountains?'

'Smoke 'em out, like varmin,' cried the trooper.

'Yes,' muttered the sergeant dryly, 'it's not a bad idea. I wonder the Victorians haven't thought of it.'

'What! Thim think uv anything—thim people over in Victoree! Sergeant, you amaze me—an' you livin' not sixty miles from the border! Be me faith! I only wish that Master Kelly would poke his dirty nose into Billabong. I'd tache the varmin that there's some intilligence in Australee, even if it is imported.'

'Talking about the Kellys,' said the sergeant's wife, who had re-entered the room in time to catch this heroic outburst, 'have you heard the latest?'

Her husband looked up inquiringly from under his brows, his one method of interrogating her.

'And what's that?' said the trooper.

'It may only be rumour; it probably is—one

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hears so many; but they say that the bush-rangers have crossed the Murray.'

The sergeant's brows went together and his little eyes narrowed strangely; but the sergeant's junior burst out laughing.

'Divil a fear of that,' said he. 'They know better than trust their necks in New South Wales. Besides, ma'am, how do you imagine that they are goin' to cross the river with our police guardin' the bank?'

'I suppose,' said the sergeant's wife apologetically, 'that it is only another of the many rumours that are flying about. Of course, people have got to believe the Kellys capable of anything; and the mere thought of them being in New South Wales is enough to upset the nerves of every soul along the border.'

'You've precious little cause for alarm, Mrs Wiggan—more's the sorrow. It's meself that would like to have a shot at the two thousand pound. It's a reward worthy uv a prince. It's bad luck to me that I'm not away over in Victoree at the present moment, where an honest man might so easily make a fortune. Never a bushranger shall we ever git in Billabong.'

'I hope not,' said the sergeant's wife, casting a meaning look at her husband.

'An' it's you that 'ud be denyin' your poor boy the chance uv gettin' his fist into two thousand pound?' exclaimed the trooper. 'An' it's you're the princess—are you?—that's turnin' your nose up at that thrillin' sum? Mrs Wiggan, I'm amazed at ye.'

'The reward has to be won, Mr Blayney,' explained the woman; 'won with the rifle, you understand?'

'I doubt it, ma'am—or at any rate in the way you mane. Take me word for't, this Kelly is a cowardly blackguard at bottom, terrorisin' ould men an' women. Wait till he meets a man.'

'Like you, Irish!' laughed the sergeant.

'Like anybody who's not afraid to look down the barrel of a pistol. I only hope your information is right, ma'am, an' that the bushrangers have crossed the river, an' that they'll take it into their heads to come as far as Billabong. Sure, it's a mighty fine reception they'll find awaitin' thim. We'll go through thim, me boy, as the divil went through Athlone.'

'And how was that?' asked the sergeant.

'Wid standin' lapes,' said the trooper.

The sergeant rose from the table, and, with his wife, quitted the room; Trooper Blayney, rising also, strolled out to the veranda to smoke a pipe preparatory to resuming duty. In ordinary times of peace the guardianship of the town and of the surrounding district devolved upon the sergeant and his subordinate, but upon gala occasions they were reinforced by a couple of men from an adjacent township. It

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was these two men who were at that moment on duty, and who presently would have to be relieved by the sergeant and the heroic Blayney.

The trooper lay back in an easy-chair in the shade of the veranda, and gave himself up to the enjoyment of his pipe and his thoughts. The one drew freely and the other ran pleasantly—very pleasantly indeed; for he pictured himself arresting, single-handed, the notorious gang of bushrangers, and of placing to his banking account the huge reward of two thousand pounds. It meant a life of ease and a return to the old country, where, in imagination, he already beheld himself the admiration and envy of every boy in the village. What a tale it would be, and how he would tell it over and over again: how he, Terence Blayney, had run to earth the great bush-rangers! Heavens! there was immortality in the thought. And Molly MacCarthy—what would she say, the jade?

The police-quarters stood at the far or western end of the street, and were composed of the house which the sergeant and his assistant occupied, and the lock-up—an ugly, square, squat erection constructed of rough-hewn logs. These buildings, standing some hundred yards back from the roadway, lent to the town that air of imposing dignity which one always associates with a jail; and the trooper, as he rolled an occasional eye towards the squat, square prison-house, thought of Kelly, and chains, and two thousand pounds.

It was that time of the day when people who have no business abroad prefer to remain within doors, and consequently but few persons passed before the half-closed eyes of the trooper. But at last, in the midst of a cloud of dust, a solitary equestrian drew up before the gate, and taking a quick glance up and down the road, trotted boldly into the police-yard, up to the veranda, and drew rein before the trooper. Dismounting, the man threw the rein loosely on his horse's neck, patted the animal fondly, whispered something in its ear, and then turned to the policeman.

The new-comer was an extremely handsome man, standing a good six feet in height, broad in proportion, and yet sloping away finely at the flanks, which gave to him an appearance of agility not often found with big men. He wore a full brown beard, a slouch-hat, riding breeches and boots, and a loose-throated shirt. Altogether an ideal bushman, with the freedom of the bush in every one of his agile movements.

The man advanced to the steps of the veranda and saluted the trooper: 'Are you Sergeant Wiggan?'

'No,' said Blayney; 'but that doesn't matter.'

'Not in the least. Is the sergeant in?'

'He was a moment ago,' and he nodded towards the back of the house. 'What do you want?'

'My business is with the sergeant,' replied the man, who by this time had mounted the veranda, and with each word had drawn closer to the trooper.

'Oh, is it?' cried Blayney, with a sneer. 'And may I ask who the mischief are you—anyway?'

'Ned Kelly,' said the stranger in a low voice. 'Up with your hands.'

Blayney sat back with a gasp. His limbs stiffened; his pipe fell from his ashy lips. Wide-staring eyes fixed themselves helplessly upon Kelly's face, while, quick as lightning, the bushranger's hands went over the trooper's body.

'It's a joke, uv coorse?' But there was no ray of humour in the bushranger's eye or in the muzzle of the pistol into which the trooper suddenly found himself looking.

'That all depends on you. Make a sign, utter a cry, and you're a dead man. Now get up—quick! Have you any one in the lock-up?'

'No.'

'Then march. Remember, a sound and I'll blow your brains out.'

It was only a few steps from the veranda to the lock-up, and, urged by the bushranger, Blayney fairly rushed the distance, Kelly's horse following at his master's heels.

'Sure, an' what is it ye intind doin' wid me, Mr Kelly?' whined the trooper.

'Nothing. Shut up!'

The heavy door was open as if in anticipation, and Kelly entered the cell with his victim.

'Now listen,' said he; 'I'm going to lock you up here for a time, but no harm will come to you if you behave yourself.'

'Sure, an' why shouldn't I, Mr Kelly dear?'

But the bushranger made no reply. Throwing a hasty but comprehensive glance round the cell, he withdrew, shooting the heavy bolts behind him. A grim smile of satisfaction stole over his bronzed face as he turned once more to the private quarters. Renowned as the most daring of all the bad men who had ever taken to evil ways, no such desperate and daring feat as this which he now contemplated had ever been known in the annals of bushranging.

With a quick step he once more mounted the veranda; but this time he entered boldly at the front door, stood for a moment to listen, and locating the sound of voices, strode rapidly forward.

'Bail up, sergeant!'

The sergeant, who had been sitting with his back to the door, sprang hastily to his feet, the

fighting spirit surging like fire through his blood; but the sight of the levelled pistol and the hard face behind it checked whatever inclination to struggle he might have entertained. Although he had no weapon on him, his hand instinctively went to his hip.

'None of that, sergeant. Up with 'em! Up with 'em—d'ye hear!' repeated the man harshly.

The sergeant looked fiercely from side to side; but as he saw no chance of escape or assistance, up, very slowly, went his hands above his head.

Kelly went over him with the ease of an expert, and found nothing but a bunch of keys.

'So,' he said, 'you had nothing there after all. Why did you make that movement?'

'Instinct, I suppose,' growled the sergeant.

'Do you know, man, you were only one second off eternity.'

The sergeant was a brave man, but he quailed.

'Who are you?' he asked. 'Kelly?'

'Yes.'

Mrs Wiggan gave a groan and collapsed in her seat.

'Don't be frightened, ma'am,' said the bushranger. 'We don't make war on women. It's a game between us and the police.'

'Then you will kill my husband?'

'Not a hair of his head shall be harmed if he obeys. But, you understand, I am not to be trifled with. Now, sergeant, I must lock you and your good lady up for a few hours. My friends and I have a call to make in the town. It may prove a trifle inconvenient to you, but it is a matter of stern necessity to us. This way, if you please. Kindly take your husband's arm, ma'am. Thanks. The sergeant is forgetting his manners.'

They passed out through the back door and round by the side of the house, the sergeant and his wife arm in arm, the bushranger bringing up the rear. In that short journey from the door to the lock-up a dozen desperate thoughts flashed through the sergeant's mind; but the knowledge that Kelly was behind him made him pause—Kelly, who shot so straight, whose neck was already in the noose. Yet the humiliation was bitter as death, and he ground his teeth and inwardly cursed his impotence.

When the door was flung open and he beheld the crestfallen Blayney, the sergeant almost laughed.

'Hullo, Irish!' he said grimly. 'Kelly has come to Billabong.'

'But only for a short visit,' said the bushranger. 'Sorry to inconvenience you, ma'am; but you'll be able to keep each other company.' Then he once more shot the bolts upon them, and this time locked the heavy padlocks with the keys he had taken from the sergeant.

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Leading his horse into the shade at the side of the house, he then went back to the veranda, and, filling a pipe, threw himself contentedly into the chair which Trooper Blayney had but lately occupied. So far the outlaw's plans had worked to perfection, the great secret of the fellow's success being that he had a head on his shoulders and a spirit daring enough to attempt the unexpected. His plans for attacking a town or a station were invariably laid with the utmost skill, and the courage with which he carried out operations was a guarantee of success.

Nevertheless, as he sat smoking, apparently unconcerned, his eyes darted quick glances up and down the road. His ears were on the alert for the slightest sound; and presently, as the clatter of hoofs drew near, he half-rose in his seat and peered anxiously in the direction from which the noise came. In a few moments a horseman appeared riding towards the town, and Kelly now stood bolt-upright and showed himself by the veranda steps. The rider did not seem to notice him; but, all the same, as he passed the station gates a piece of white paper was seen to flutter from his saddle. Kelly drew himself up. A strange, hard look appeared about his mouth and in his eyes, and with a stiffening of the muscles, as it were, he crossed once more to the lock-up.

'I am going to open the door,' he cried, 'but the Irishman only is to come out. If you attempt a rush, sergeant, you're a dead man.'

Kelly knew that, dead or alive, he was worth the sum of two thousand pounds—for such a price had been placed upon his head—and that nothing short of the absolute certainty of losing their own lives would stop them from attempting to capture him. But fortunately for him there is much power in an evil reputation, and rumour had not lessened his. As a consequence, his name alone commanded the utmost respect, and the cry, 'Bail up! I am Ned Kelly,' was enough to send the valour helter-skelter out of a man.

In this instance nothing was attempted. He undid the bolts and stepped back, calling upon Trooper Blayney to push the door open. This that worthy did, and stepping out, beheld fate, in the person of the bushranger, standing by with a revolver in his hand.

'Now shut that door,' said Kelly peremptorily. 'I want you.'

'Yes, Mr Kelly.'

Blayney obeyed without demur. Indeed, it is highly probable that he enjoyed shutting the bolts on his superior officer. Kelly himself saw to the locking, and then re-entered the house with the trooper.

'Now,' said he, 'you and I are going for a stroll through the town. Have you a tunic and a helmet that will fit me?'

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'The sergeant is not as tall as you, Mr Kelly; but he's powerful broad, and he has a terrible big head.'

The sergeant's coat and helmet were lying across an arm of the sofa, and into these Kelly quickly got. The former was a trifle small, and considerably short in the arms; but the latter fitted well enough, and the bushranger seemed perfectly pleased with the transformation.

'Well,' said he, turning towards the trooper, who, spell-bound, gazed admiringly upon the outlaw, 'no one will expect to find Ned Kelly inside a policeman's uniform—eh?'

'Be the powers, no! An' it's a rare iligant trooper you make, Mr Kelly; an' sorrow's me that ye weren't brought up to the foorec.'

'Well, I've joined it now,' replied the outlaw, with a grim smile. 'Better late than never.'

The trooper could scarcely realise that this talkative, affable, handsome man was the notorious Kelly, the man whose unparalleled daring filled the whole of Australia with wonder, fear, and admiration; the man who had practically wrecked a Ministry and hurled sundry high officials from office; the man who held with a grip of terror the whole of the north-eastern district of Victoria. And this bogie, this spectre, this terror, was here now, talking like an ordinary man—and surely, like an ordinary man, he could be as easily overcome.

The thought flashed like lightning through the trooper's brain. But one blow—one good blow—and it was two thousand golden pounds in his pocket! Think of it—two thousand golden pounds! The trooper was a powerful young man. If he could only make sure of his spring; if he could only catch the outlaw off his guard. But if he failed? This made him pause, as it had made so many men pause before. For Kelly was a man already doomed to the rope or the bullet; a crime more or less was nothing in his awful indictment. He would shoot, and shoot straight, at the first sign of treachery. Trooper Blayney decided to postpone his attack.

Kelly looked the policeman closely in the eyes, and fingered his revolver in a way that made Blayney's flesh creep. It seemed to him that his thoughts lay white and bare to those dark, penetrating eyes, and he shivered as he watched the forefinger curl round the trigger.

'For hiven's sake, Mr Kelly dear, turn away that bastely wipon. Suppose by any chance it should go off?'

'It will not go off—unless you make it. Now, listen to me. You and I are going for a stroll through the town. I have some business there, and if I go with you no one will suspect. I have no doubt that you will have plenty of opportunities of betraying me; but the moment



you make sign or word—remember, that moment will be your last.’

‘Oh, Mr Kelly dear, for what would I betray you?’

‘Two thousand pounds,’ said the bushranger grimly. ‘Remember, my name’s Maloney, and I’m a trooper from over the border.’

‘Come to sarch for the Kellys mayhap?’

‘Mayhap. You understand?’

‘Perfectly.’

As the real and the false policeman strolled down the station-yard and out on to the foot-path, they almost immediately passed a man leading a horse. The fellow was not to be distinguished from the ordinary run of bushmen, except that the horse he led seemed of a better blood and quality than usually fell to the lot of such people. Indeed, the trooper was so busy watching the horse that he did not see the look which passed between Kelly and the man.

‘A mighty fine piece of horseflesh,’ said the trooper. ‘I wonder where that vagabond got it?’

‘Shook it,’ replied the bushranger.

‘I can quite belave you. What would the likes uv him be doin’ wid a bit uv blood like that?’ He looked round after the man. ‘Be the powers, he’s interin’ the station!’

‘Yes,’ muttered Kelly laconically. ‘I told him to.’

‘Oh, thin he’s one uv your friends, Mr Kelly?’

Kelly smiled. ‘Yes.’

‘If it wouldn’t be rude, might I inquire his name?’

‘Steve Hart,’ said the outlaw.

A peculiarly horrid shiver ran down the constable’s back.

‘Thin, is it that you’re all here?’ he asked in a frightened whisper.

‘We are all here.’

They walked on in silence for some little distance, the policeman vainly cudgelling his brains to discover some safe method by which he could give the alarm. What a glorious stroke of fortune it would be, and what an honour for Billabong, if they could only lay this gang of scoundrels by the heels! After all, there were only four of them. It would be a lasting shame to Billabong, and an irreparable loss to their pockets, if they permitted the ruffians to get clear away.

As they advanced deeper into the town the adventure grew more exciting. People saluted them right and left, and Kelly always returned the salute. The trooper perspired freely. Why would not these stupid people see that this supposed policeman was no policeman at all, but the notorious outlaw who was worth, dead or alive, two thousand golden pounds? He could have shrieked it aloud; and he would have only for that grim

face so close to his, and the awful knowledge that the right hand, which Kelly kept in his pocket, held a revolver. Indeed, between Blayney and eternity there was only the lining of a coat.

A crowd of noisy men blocked up the foot-path before a hotel. ‘Now,’ thought the trooper, ‘this is my opportunity. If I call they are bound to take him.’ True—there was no doubt of that; but should he live to witness the capture? Or—this was a more serious thought—should he benefit by the reward? Kelly, as if reading the man’s thoughts, pressed closer to the side of his companion and linked arms with him. Trooper Blayney had not yet decided to speak.

About a hundred yards farther on they stopped beneath the veranda of the Union Bank, the doors of which were still open.

‘They work late in Billabong?’ said the outlaw.

‘Not usually; but this is a special occasion.’ The trooper smiled. By the powers! had Kelly’s appearance in Billabong anything to do with the big banking transactions of the annual sale? He knew that Kelly had a weakness for banks. Indeed, that redoubtable personage had a contempt for anything beneath the dignity of such flourishing institutions. He was no ordinary highway robber who stopped coaches and relieved the frightened passengers of their purses. Kelly dealt in big things.

As they were about to pass on they were suddenly confronted by another trooper, who came upon them unexpectedly from round a corner. Kelly had just time to whisper in Blayney’s ear, ‘Remember!’ when the guardian of the law advanced. It was a ticklish moment for the outlaw, and his heart beat a throb or two quicker; but his face preserved its usual imperturbable calm. His fingers tightened on the hidden revolver.

‘Well?’ said the new arrival, advancing with a smile. He was a pleasant-faced man, and evidently one with whom the world went well.

‘The top o’ the afternoon,’ said Blayney in a strange, quivering voice. ‘How’s things?’

‘Quiet,’ said the man, looking hard at Kelly.

‘Ah! we’re a model lot in Billabong,’ was the reply. ‘But, Johnson, me boy, let me introduce you to me fri’nd Maloney from over the Victoree side.’

‘Glad to meet you,’ said Trooper Johnson. ‘And how’s things in Victoria?’

‘Dull,’ said Kelly.

‘Look at that now, and the bushrangers still at large.’

‘It’s to sarch for thim same bushrangers that me fri’nd Maloney has come into New South Wales.’

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The trooper laughed. 'I don't think they'll venture our side of the river. Victoria is much safer.'

'So I told my sergeant,' said Kelly, with a laugh. 'But where was the officer who ever listened to a subordinate?'

The man, who had been studying Kelly intently, laughed.

'Queer words to come from one who wears the stripes,' said he, pointing to the sergeant's badge on Kelly's arm. The bushranger felt a peculiar, hopeless sensation pass through him, but no sign of it fluttered across his immobile face. The furrow between his brows deepened infinitesimally as his eyes caught those of Blayney. That worthy had insensibly sidled towards the other trooper, but Kelly's look brought him to a standstill. With a smile the bushranger explained the apparent incongruity.

'This is a coat I borrowed from Sergeant Wiggan. You might have guessed it wasn't mine by the fit.'

'Nor the helmet either,' replied the man, with a laugh. 'You haven't adopted our shape yet in Victoria?'

'No; but we're hoping to. The fact is, I had an accident with my own, and so you behold me in borrowed plumes.'

The man laughed, Kelly laughed, but Trooper Blayney laughed loudest of all. It was like a play, and much more exciting. The cool effrontery of the outlaw filled the trooper with admiration. No wonder the country was ringing with the unparalleled daring of this man. Already he fancied he could hear the huge guffaw go up from the length and breadth of Australia when it learned how Kelly came to Billabong.

The three men strolled onward chatting amicably, Kelly very considerably placing himself in the middle, with Trooper Blayney on his right hand—the hand that held the revolver.

'So you've come over to look for the Kellys?' said Trooper Johnson.

'Bad luck to them!' replied the bushranger. Blayney started to giggle, but Kelly, moving close to him, pressed something hard against the Irishman's side. It was something more than a joke.

'But what on earth brings you to Billabong?'

'Haven't you heard the latest rumour?' asked Kelly.

'No. What's that?'

'It is said that the outlaws have crossed the border.'

'They've said that a dozen times,' replied the trooper complacently. 'I don't believe a word of it. Kelly's no fool. He knows when he's well off. He'll stick to the ranges in Victoria until he's smoked out.'

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'A difficult process,' said the bushranger. 'They say he's pretty clever.'

'Pooh! I should like to know where it comes in. If the Victorians had a man with an ounce of brains or a pound of courage, the vermin would have been exterminated long ago.'

'Tell me, Johnson, me dear man,' said Blayney, who, notwithstanding the fact that the words 'two thousand pounds' kept ringing in his ears, had enough humour left to appreciate the situation, 'what would ye do now if ye were brought face to face wid Ned himself?'

The trooper shook his head and smiled sadly. 'No such luck.'

'A smart man like you, Johnson, would do the thrick, I'm thinkin'.'

'I should like to get the chance,' said Mr Johnson.

During the whole of this time Blayney assiduously racked his brains for an inspiration, but no feasible—that is, safe—plan presented itself. It was maddening to think that this audacious rascal who strolled so complacently between them was worth two thousand pounds, a thousand each for him and Johnson if he could only tip that dunderhead the office. Sometimes the temptation to risk all, to call out, 'Arrest this man: he is Ned Kelly!' was so great that it was with difficulty he snapped his teeth on the words. For one thing, Johnson, like the rest of the world, was so sure that Kelly was in Victoria that he would have regarded the cry as a joke, and disdained to move accordingly. But another and more serious reason dissuaded Blayney from the attempt. That cry would probably be his last on earth, and the Irishman had not found life so hard that he was in an exceeding hurry to quit it.

They left Johnson to resume his beat, and slowly retraced their steps through the town. Dozens of eyes marked Kelly, but no one saw in him the redoubtable bushranger. It was merely, 'Who's the new trooper with Blayney?' and nothing more. And so they passed on, and as they approached the police-station once more Blayney knew that his chances of winning that reward had diminished almost to vanishing-point, and the perspiration fairly oozed from him, and he felt wickedly desperate.

Opposite the station gates stood a four-wheeled trap, and in it sat a young man nonchalantly smoking a pipe. This individual, a low-browed, scowling rascal, grinned quite pleasantly as Kelly and the trooper approached.

'Well?' he cried.

'All right. You can drive on.'

The trap instantly moved off.

'Who's that?' asked the trooper.

'Dan,' was the answer.

The trooper looked furtively over his shoulder at the retreating buggy. So that was Dan

Kelly, the brother of the truculent ruffian by his side, the youngest member of this gang of desperadoes, and yet the one who bore the most evil reputation of them all. Despair seized upon him, and he sighed aloud. His chance of winning the reward had vanished utterly. Kelly had laid his plans too well to fail. If the trooper had not felt so deeply, desperately annoyed at the loss of the two thousand pounds, he might have admired the outlaw greatly. For there was a daring, a courage here which commanded admiration; and Blayney was too good a sportsman to decry a brave adversary.

As they crossed the police-yard the ruffian whom Kelly had called Steve Hart appeared on the veranda, hands in pockets, pipe in mouth,

the very embodiment of cool effrontery, and to him Kelly handed over the trooper. He accepted the duty with a grin, and presently the lock-up received Blayney once again, and he was left to regale the sergeant and the sergeant's trembling wife with a recital of his walk through Billabong with the outlaw.

About a quarter of an hour afterwards, those who were in the immediate vicinity of the Union Bank saw the trooper from Victoria enter the building; but it was not until the next morning that the people knew Kelly had come to Billabong, that he had 'stuck up' the bank, and that it was consequently five thousand pounds the poorer for his visit.

### PARTING—AND AFTER.

The moonlight once again is here,  
The moving months with joy I see;  
The passing weeks are bringing near  
The time when Norah comes to me.

The precious moments quickly flew,  
And fast the final hour drew nigh  
When I to home must bid adieu,  
And to my sweetheart say good-bye.

A ling'ring kiss, a long embrace,  
Low words, a last fond look, a prayer;  
Then growing distance dimmed her face:  
Parted? I hardly knew we were.

To her my heart has ever turned  
E'er since that separation-day,

When flying train and fleeting ship  
Bore me so fast and far away.

The skies were dull, the trees were bare,  
And autumn winds with winter blew;  
I left her in the city there,  
Silent and sad and tearful too,

Because an anxious, doubtful year,  
By weary waiting longer made,  
Loomed up between her love and her,  
And made her maiden heart afraid.

With holy joy and deep delight  
We hail the coming of the time  
When sundered hearts shall reunite,  
And she for ever shall be mine.

G. G. G.

